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## Department of the Interior

Daily update · April 23, 2018

NEWS

### [Interior attorney: It's easier to adopt regs than to repeal them](#)

The Grand Junction Daily Sentinel

The **Interior Department** has been working to repeal Obama administration rules involving regulation of methane venting and flaring and hydraulic fracturing in oil and gas, and valuation of coal, oil and gas for royalty purposes. Part of its effort has been focused on putting the regulations on hold while ...



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### [Interior Department Axes Flighty Bird Regs](#)

Economics21

Under previous administrations the **Interior Department** expanded the scope of the Act by ruling that companies and individuals could be held liable for unintentional avicide. Now the **Interior Department** has announced it would only prosecute intentional bird-killing, keeping to the historical spirit of the ...



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### [Native American Tribe Battles to Keep Land](#)

Voice of America

Shifting federal policy? The Bureau of Indian Affairs reports to the U.S. **Department of the Interior**. The Interior Department said it would make a decision about the future of the Mashpee's reservation by June 2017, yet no decision has been made. It may be a long time in coming, suggests Bryan Newland, ...



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### [The California Label Getting Us to Care About Our National Parks, One Vintage-Style Tee at a Time](#)

Fashionista (blog)

Established by President Woodrow Wilson in August 2016, the National Park Service — a federal bureau within the **Department of the Interior** — is responsible for protecting national parks and monuments like the Grand Canyon, Yosemite and, of course, Yellowstone. Today, the National Park Service ...



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## Officials attend renaming event for Canyons of the Ancients center

The Durango Herald

Michael Bennett and **Interior Secretary** Ryan Zinke, visitors celebrated with cake and tours of the museum and nearby Escalante Pueblo. Marietta Eaton, manager of Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, said the new name will make clearer the connection between the center and the monument.



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## John Oliver Blasts Ryan Zinke As A "Deeply Strange Man" & The Details Will Make You Cringe

Bustle

Sunday's episode of Last Week Tonight focused on one of the more obscure members of President Trump's cabinet: **Secretary of Interior** Ryan Zinke. Comedian John Oliver brought up Zinke's awkward or straight up outrageous remarks. And yeah, they are kind of cringe-worthy — enough for Oliver to ...

[Watch: John Oliver busts 'deeply strange' fake geologist Ryan Zinke who Trump named secretary ...](#) - Raw Story

[Full Coverage](#)



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## Mount Pleasant's iconic St. Andrew's Church heavily damaged by fire

Charleston Post Courier

A waterfall flowed down the steps outside what had been his **office**. As parishioners look upon what used to be their place of worship Sunday, many wondered aloud about the fate of the large oak cross that towers above the **interior of the ministry** center. By late morning, a photo taken by someone who ...



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## GDOE to get more federal funds, 'highly confident' in managing its own money

Pacific Daily News

The U.S. **Department** of Education designated Guam DOE as a high-risk grantee due to past improper management of federal education funds, which means Guam DOE has been ... On Monday morning, Domenech and Pula visited Southern High **School**, which is among the recipients of **Interior** funds.



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## Briefs

Press Herald

Applicants are limited to state agencies, county governments, municipal governments, educational institutions and private nonprofit institutions as defined by the Internal Revenue Service. Projects must be directed by people with professional credentials as defined by the **Department of the Interior**, and ...



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## The Bipartisanship at the Core of the Trump Infrastructure Plan

Governing

One, for example, would address the massive shortfall in the infrastructure funding needs of our national parks by allowing the **Interior Department** to retain and reinvest revenues generated by expanded energy development. Another would loosen restrictions on tolling of interstate highways and ...



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## National Park service

As-it-happens update · April 24, 2018

NEWS

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**HBO's John Oliver mocks Ryan Zinke as 'deeply strange' 'weirdo'**

Great Falls Tribune

U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke speaks in support of the re-introduction of the grizzly bear to the North Cascades in Washington during a news conference

Friday, March 23, 2018. Zinke made his announcement at the North Cascades National Park Service Complex Headquarters in ...



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## zinke

As-it-happens update · April 23, 2018

NEWS

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### Last Week Tonight with John Oliver: The Iran Deal, Ryan Zinke, and more

CarterMatt

There was a new edition of Last Week Tonight with John Oliver this weekend, and (of course) the host decided to kick things off with a discussion of Michael Cohen. While there were a few good jokes when it comes to Donald Trump's personal lawyer, eventually the show did pivot over to a new topic: ...



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## zinke

As-it-happens update · April 23, 2018

NEWS

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### [John Oliver Blasts Ryan Zinke As A "Deeply Strange Man" & The Details Will Make You Cringe](#)

Bustle

Sunday's episode of *Last Week Tonight* focused on one of the more obscure members of President Trump's cabinet: Secretary of Interior Ryan Zinke. Comedian John Oliver brought up **Zinke's** awkward or straight up outrageous remarks. And yeah, they are kind of cringe-worthy — enough for Oliver to ...



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## zinke

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### [Watch: John Oliver busts 'deeply strange' fake geologist Ryan Zinke who Trump named secretary ...](#)

Raw Story

Oliver points out that Trump may not totally understand what Zinke's department does—and that "he sounds like a man at a yard sale trying to sell a couch he f\*cked." Zinke also, oddly, has his own flag and commemorative coins. "I believe the exchange rate for them is 'here, take it, I don't want it, the ...

[John Oliver Compares Donald Trump Administration To 'Sharknado'](#) - Deadline

[Full Coverage](#)



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### [While wind is key to our future, offshore oil drilling belongs in the past](#)

The Boston Globe

I was pleased that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke highlighted the role offshore wind should play in the future of American energy production ("American energy dominance means Massachusetts wind," Opinion, April 16). Other world powers, such as the European Union and China, are strategically ...



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## zinke

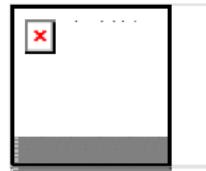
As-it-happens update · April 23, 2018

NEWS

### John Oliver profiles Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, an 'important, deeply strange man'

The Week Magazine

If you don't know who Ryan Zinke is, don't feel too bad — President Trump pretty clearly isn't sure what his interior secretary does, John Oliver said on Sunday's *Last Week Tonight*, kicking this off with a NSFW analogy. "Zinke's job is to serve as a steward of America's public lands, although so far he's ...



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### Trump likes coal, but that doesn't mean he's hostile to wind

Washington Post

The administration is looking to renewable energy sources to help create "energy dominance" that will guarantee America is a leading global energy exporter and can't be held hostage by foreign energy-producing powers, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke says — even as Trump's plan to expand offshore ...



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## zinke

As-it-happens update · April 23, 2018

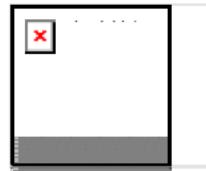
NEWS

### [HBO's John Oliver mocks Ryan Zinke as 'deeply strange' 'weirdo'](#)

Great Falls Tribune

Warning: The clip has frequent use of the f-word. HBO's John Oliver put U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke of Whitefish in his sights on Sunday's episode of "Last Week Tonight."

Oliver mocked Zinke calling himself a geologist. Geology was his college major at the University of Oregon, but he "has never ...



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### [Play of the Day: Ryan Zinke's Not a Geologist](#)

GovExec.com

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is under some pressure because of his use of a special flag at headquarters to denote when he is in the building. Last Week Tonight's John Oliver joked about the flag, saying it's something Queen Elizabeth would do. Oliver also joked about Zinke's repeated claim that he's a ...



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## zinke

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**'Last Week Tonight:' John Oliver talks Iran Deal**  
TheCelebrityCafe.com

Starting off the show, John Oliver takes a biographical look at the Secretary of the Interior, Ryan **Zinke**. Instead of questioning his politics or scandals, as he normally does in these segments, Oliver really took the time to just showcase how strange **Zinke** is. Besides the fact that he claims he is a geologist ...

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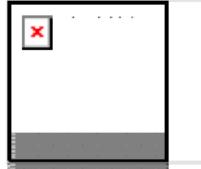


## zinke

As-it-happens update · April 23, 2018

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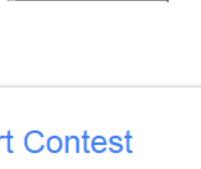
**John Oliver Skewers Ryan Zinke** 

Outside Magazine

"**Zinke** is an oil-friendly, coin-commissioning, non-Bin Laden-killing weirdo who throws second ladies around, and he is not a fucking geologist. America!" That's how John Oliver summed up his segment on Interior Secretary **Ryan Zinke** last night.

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**USFWS Announces Winner of 2018 National Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest** 

American Hunter (press release) (blog)

U.S. Secretary of the Interior **Ryan Zinke** and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have announced the winner of the National Junior Duck Stamp Contest: 18-year-old Rayen Kang of Johns Creek, Ga. A panel of five judges chose the entry, which features an emperor goose and is painted in acrylic, from ...

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**From:** POLITICO Pro Energy <politicoemail@politicopro.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 24, 2018 5:44 AM  
**To:** Laura\_rigas@ios.doi.gov  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Morning Energy: Pruitt's watershed moment — 'Secret science' policy coming — Blankenship slipping

By Kelsey Tamborrino | 04/24/2018 05:42 AM EDT

*With help from Emily Holden*

**PRUITT'S WATERSHED MOMENT:** EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt is approaching his two separate House committee hearings this week with sagging support on the hill. The make-or-break moment is approaching as once-stalwart backers begin to express concern about the controversies that have swirled in recent weeks. Republican Sen. [Jim Inhofe](#) (Okla.) — perhaps Pruitt's staunchest ally in Congress — told Pro's Anthony Adragna he thinks it's "appropriate to have a hearing in so far as any accusation having to do with his office is concerned," and he cited a [report](#) in The New York Times detailing a sweetheart deal Pruitt received on an Oklahoma City home previously owned by a lobbyist.

Sen. [Shelley Moore Capito](#) (R-W.Va.) also thought Thursday's hearings before the House Energy and Commerce and Appropriations committees would prove pivotal for Pruitt's long-term future in the administration. "It's really important," Capito said. "He's going to have to answer some tough questions. I'm sure they'll be put to him by both sides and we'll see what his response is."

And Sen. [John Boozman](#) joined his two Republican colleagues in supporting hearings by the Environment and Public Works Committee. Meanwhile, [sources told](#) Bloomberg that administration officials privately cautioned lawmakers and other conservative allies to pump the brakes on their defenses of Pruitt.

Publicly, however, the White House stands firm in its commitment to Pruitt. Press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders [told reporters](#) the administration is "continuing to review a number of the reports" about Pruitt, but noted the EPA chief "has done a good job of implementing the president's policies," particularly on deregulation and energy dominance. White House legislative affairs director Marc Short was more direct earlier Monday: "I think Scott Pruitt is doing a great job and we look forward to keeping him there as EPA administrator," he told MSNBC.

**More to come?** Earlier Monday, five senior congressional Democrats [asked](#) House Oversight Chairman [Trey Gowdy](#) to obtain further documents and hold hearings after obtaining new records they say raise "troubling" new questions about Pruitt's security expenditures. EPW ranking member [Tom Carper](#) told Anthony he had a good conversation with Gowdy regarding Pruitt, but said there was no formal bipartisan agreement to work together on an investigation. "I just gave him plenty of encouragement that he's doing the right thing," Carper said. Read [more](#).

**WELCOME TO TUESDAY!** I'm your host Kelsey Tamborrino. Congrats to the Nuclear Energy Institute's Robert Powers, who was first to correctly guess Mary Walker was the first woman to receive the Medal of Honor. For today: Who is the last former senator to appear on a U.S. postage stamp? Send your tips, energy gossip and comments to [ktamborrino@politico.com](mailto:ktamborrino@politico.com), or follow us on Twitter [@kelseytam](#), [@Morning\\_Energy](#) and [@POLITICOPRO](#).

**POLITICO's Ben White** is bringing Morning Money to the Milken Institute Global Conference to provide coverage of the day's events and evening happenings. The newsletter will run April 29 - May 2. [Sign up to keep up with your daily conference coverage.](#)

**BLINDED WITH SCIENCE:** EPA's Pruitt is expected to unveil his new science policy that restricts the agency from relying on research that doesn't make public all its available data, a source briefed on the announcement tells Pro's Emily Holden. The proposed rule, which the agency submitted to the White House for review last week, will mirror legislation from House Science Chairman [Lamar Smith](#) (R-Texas).

**Pruitt argues the change will bolster transparency**, but scientists and health advocates say it is an effort to constrain rulemaking. The rollout has been delayed as agency officials tried to determine how to treat industry research used to evaluate the safety of pesticides and toxic chemicals, as Pro's Annie Snider [reported](#) last week. While academic studies often can't disclose data that includes personal health records, corporations can't reveal proprietary information either.

**SCIENTISTS REACT:** Close to 1,000 scientists signed onto a letter to Pruitt Monday, calling on the administrator to reverse course on his plans to revise how the agency considers outside research. "EPA can only adequately protect our air and water and keep us safe from harmful chemicals if it takes full advantage of the wealth of scientific research that is available to the agency," write the scientists, including some former EPA career staffers. Read it [here](#).

**A BLANK SLIP:** GOP establishment attacks on former coal baron Don Blankenship seem to be taking hold, POLITICO's Alex Isenstadt reports via new polling. With the West Virginia Senate primary a mere two weeks away, a poll out Monday found Blankenship falling behind his more mainstream rivals, GOP Rep. [Evan Jenkins](#) and state Attorney General Patrick Morrisey. The poll found Morrisey leading with 24 percent, followed by Jenkins with 20 percent, and Blankenship trailing with 12 percent.

**National Republicans have scrambled to intervene** in the race, concerned that a Blankenship primary win would destroy their prospects of defeating Democratic Sen. [Joe Manchin](#) in November. Blankenship, who spent a year in jail following the deadly 2010 explosion at his Upper Big Branch Mine, has poured nearly \$2 million of his own money into a slash-and-burn style campaign savaging Jenkins and Morrisey as pawns of the establishment, Alex writes. Blankenship has also used the Senate run as a path to clear his name. So far, much of his campaign has been geared toward portraying himself as the casualty of the Obama-era Justice Department, which he says was bent on locking him up.

**The new survey, which was conducted** April 17-April 19 and has a margin of error of 4.9 percentage points, precedes a GOP debate today, and another that will be hosted by Fox News next week for a nationally televised audience. Read [more](#).

**SPECIAL ELECTION TODAY:** Arizona voters will decide today who will pick up the seat left vacant by Rep. Trent Franks' departure in the state's 8th District. While neither candidate highlights specific environmental issues on her campaign website, Republican Debbie Lesko and Democrat Hiral Tipirneni have markedly different takes on climate change. Tipirneni's [site](#) says she believes "climate change is real and that we need to reduce carbon emissions." Meanwhile, Lesko said during a debate [earlier this year](#) that "certainly not the majority" of climate change is human-caused. "I think it just goes through cycles and it has to do a lot with the sun. So no, I'm not a global warming proponent," she said.

**RULES TO MEET ON COLUMBIA RIVER BILL:** The House Rules Committee [will meet](#) at 5 p.m. to formulate a rule on [H.R. 3144 \(115\)](#), which would void the environmental impact statement process for altering the hydropower system along the Columbia and Snake rivers. [Earlier this month](#), the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals sided with the state of Oregon, the Nez Perce tribe and conservation groups, ruling that dam operations

on the Columbia and Snake rivers must forgo hydropower production during key times of the year to protect endangered salmon. An environmental impact statement for the system has been the subject of congressional fights, with Rep. [Cathy McMorris Rodgers](#) filing the legislation to void that process.

**COAL ASH HEARING TODAY:** EPA holds a [public hearing](#) today on its proposal to [roll back](#) the Obama-era regulation for the cleanup and disposal of coal ash. The hearing will begin at 9 a.m. in Arlington, Va., where there will be three sessions: 9 a.m. until noon; another beginning at 1 p.m. and ending at 4 p.m.; and a final session beginning at 5 p.m. and ending at 8 p.m.

**PROMISES, PROMISES:** Senate spending leaders vowed to restore chamber-wide debate on amendments to individual appropriations bills, Pro's Sarah Ferris and Kaitlyn Burton [report](#). It's a risky move, ME readers may recall, considering how Democrats [blocked](#) a largely noncontroversial Energy and Water bill in 2016 because of a proposed amendment on Iran, and in 2015, House Republicans' Interior-Environment bill was tripped up by an unrelated rider on the Confederate flag. But Senate Appropriations Chairman [Richard Shelby](#) and his Democratic counterpart [Patrick Leahy](#) told committee members in a closed-door meeting Monday that leadership has agreed to allow amendments on the Senate floor for every individual spending bill. And the two have met with Majority Leader [Mitch McConnell](#) and Minority Leader [Chuck Schumer](#) in recent days about opening up the floor for debate on spending bills.

**JUDGE: ENBRIDGE PIPELINE SHOULD STICK TO PLAN :** An administrative law judge recommended on Monday that Minnesota regulators approve Enbridge Energy's proposal for replacing its Line 3 crude oil pipeline. But the court stipulated that the pipeline should follow the existing route, not the company's preferred route, which would carry Canadian tar sands crude from Alberta across areas in the Mississippi River, the Associated Press reports. Administrative Law Judge Ann O'Reilly's recommendation to the Public Utilities Commission sets up further disputes, "because the existing line crosses two Ojibwe reservations where tribal governments have made it clear that they won't consent and want the old line removed altogether." Read [more](#).

**A METHANE TO THE MADNESS:** The comment period on the Bureau of Land Management's proposal to reverse the Methane Waste Prevention Rule ended Monday, drawing thousands of far-reaching comments. The left-leaning Center for Western Priorities [analyzed a random sample](#) of 2,000 comments, it said, finding 99.8 percent of them were opposed to the proposal. The Independent Petroleum Association of America and Western Energy Alliance meanwhile submitted joint [comments](#) applauding the move. "We were pleased to see workable changes are being considered to the rule that more accurately represent the scope of power and authority given to the BLM for regulating this type of activity," IPAA's Dan Naatz said in a statement. And, E2, an affiliate of the Natural Resources Defense Council, sent a letter to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke on Monday, expressing its opposition to BLM's proposal. Close to 400 businesses signed onto that letter, which calls BLM's proposal "a net negative for the American public." Read it [here](#).

**MAIL CALL! IN HONOR OF NATIONAL PARKS WEEK:** League of Conservation Voters organized 122 groups — including the American Civil Liberties Union and the Human Rights Campaign — in a letter to members of Congress opposing the administration's moves on public lands. National monuments "have helped make our public lands more inclusive," the letter states, before calling on lawmakers to "reject any legislation that would limit the president's authority under the Antiquities Act or codify any unlawful rollbacks of existing national monuments." Read it [here](#).

**FOR YOUR RADAR:** The House will vote to overhaul the 1988 Stafford Act this week, Pro's Budget & Appropriations team [reports](#). The three-decade-old bill is the main piece of legislation overseeing federal disaster-relief efforts, with proposed tweaks that include new incentives to build "smarter and stronger to better withstand disasters in the future," according to GOP Majority Leader [Kevin McCarthy](#)'s office. That could equate to big changes on how states spend disaster relief money.

**ICYMI: ZINKE DRAWS OLIVER'S IRE:** The Interior secretary got the full treatment from HBO host John Oliver on "Last Week Tonight" on Sunday. Oliver hit Zinke for [referring to himself](#) as a geologist and said he "has a real flair for creative license." Of course, Zinke is not the first to draw scrutiny from the HBO host. A judge recently dismissed a defamation lawsuit brought by coal magnate Bob Murray against Oliver, who referred to Murray as a "geriatric Dr. Evil." Watch the Zinke video [here](#).

**STATE NEWS — CUOMO INTRODUCES PLASTIC BAG BILL:** New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo introduced [a bill](#) Monday to ban the use of plastic bags throughout the state, Pro New York's Danielle Muoio reports. The legislation — a long-sought promise from Cuomo — would give the state Department of Environmental Conservation jurisdiction over all matters concerning plastic bags and recycling, but comes with caveats that left some environmental advocates saying it isn't far-reaching enough. Read [more](#).

## QUICK HITS

- Trump administration official says it's a "top priority" to improve American weather forecasting model, [The Washington Post](#).
- Sources: Arrested Chevron workers could face treason charge in Venezuela, [Reuters](#).
- Trump likes coal, but that doesn't mean he's hostile to wind, [Associated Press](#).
- Halliburton writes off investment in crisis-hit Venezuela, [Financial Times](#).
- U.S. coal bailout review slows after Trump faces pushback, [Bloomberg](#).

## HAPPENING TODAY

8:00 a.m. — American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers holds [security conference](#), New Orleans

10:00 a.m. — Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee [hearing](#) on the president's proposed budget request for FY 2019 for the Forest Service, 366 Dirksen

10:00 a.m. — Senate Foreign Relations Committee [hearing](#) on nominations, including Jackie Wolcott to be representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency, 419 Dirksen

10:00 a.m. — The Bipartisan Policy Center [webcast](#) on "Can America's Infrastructure Withstand the Next Natural Disasters? Lessons Learned from Previous Disasters."

3:00 p.m. — Woodrow Wilson Center [book launch discussion](#) on "Can We Price Carbon?" 1300 Pennsylvania Ave NW

5:00 p.m. — Johns Hopkins University's Energy, Resources and Environment [presentation](#) on "Cities as Innovation Centers: Investing in Resilient Infrastructure," 1619 Massachusetts Avenue NW

## THAT'S ALL FOR ME!

*To view online:*

<https://www.politicopro.com/newsletters/morning-energy/2018/04/pruitts-watershed-moment-180878>

Stories from POLITICO Pro

## **White House reiterates support for Pruitt** [Back](#)

By Anthony Adragna | 04/23/2018 02:30 PM EDT

The White House says it is still standing behind EPA's Scott Pruitt, voicing support for the embattled administrator two days after it was revealed that a Washington lobbyist whose wife rented a condo to him personally [lobbied Pruitt](#) despite weeks of denying they had held any meetings.

"We're reviewing some of those allegations, however Administrator Pruitt has done a good job of implementing the president's policies, particularly on deregulation," press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said at the White House briefing.

She added the administration continues its look into Pruitt's conduct, including his lavish spending, first-class travel arrangements, pay raises for political appointees and use of security personnel. White House budget director Mick Mulvaney told a congressional subcommittee last week he'd [investigate](#) the EPA chief's spending \$43,000 on a privacy booth for his office.

Pruitt is scheduled to testify at two [House hearings](#) on Thursday.

**What's next:** Sanders said the White House is "monitoring" additional reports about Pruitt.

*To view online [click here.](#)*

[Back](#)

## **White House stands behind Pruitt despite new lobbying disclosure** [Back](#)

By Anthony Adragna | 04/23/2018 01:54 PM EDT

The White House said Monday it still stands behind EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, praising him for enacting President Donald Trump's environmental and energy policies even as it looked into reports of ethical lapses.

It was the first statement from the White House since [POLITICO first reported](#) that despite his denials, Pruitt had met with a lobbyist whose wife rented the Environmental Protection Agency chief his \$50-per-night condo. A disclosure form filled late Friday said J. Steven Hart had lobbied the EPA, although both the agency and the lobbyist contend the meeting, held last July, did not constitute formal lobbying.

"We're reviewing some of those allegations. However, Administrator Pruitt has done a good job of implementing the president's policies, particularly on deregulation," press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said at the White House briefing.

The White House has been looking into Pruitt's lavish spending on first-class travel arrangements, pay raises for political appointees and use of security personnel. Budget director Mick Mulvaney told a congressional subcommittee last week he'd [investigate](#) the EPA chief's spending of \$43,000 on a privacy booth for his office.

That's on top of several ongoing probes by the EPA's own watchdog and three by congressional committees, including the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

Pruitt is scheduled to testify at two House hearings on Thursday.

Sanders' comments come as five senior congressional Democrats asked House Oversight Chairman Trey Gowdy (R-S.C.) to seek new documents and hold hearings regarding "troubling" new questions about Pruitt's security expenditures.

According to nonpublic documents cited in the Democrats' letter, Pruitt's office was not cleared for classified communications as of March 2017. EPA previously said Pruitt's need to handle such information justified the installation of the privacy booth. The Government Accountability Office [concluded last week](#) the agency violated federal law by not informing Congress of the purchase.

The letter also alleges that a [security sweep](#) of Pruitt's office — the contract for which went to a business partner of Pruitt's security chief, Pasquale "Nino" Perrotta — went outside federal contracting norms without proper pre-approval.

"Given the latest developments and these new documents, we believe these and related matters are ripe for additional document requests to EPA and that Administrator Pruitt should testify about all of these matters immediately," the lawmakers wrote. Sens. Tom Carper of Delaware and Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island and Reps. Elijah Cummings of Maryland and Gerry Connolly and Don Beyer, both of Virginia, signed the letter.

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## Pruitt support in Senate erodes as GOP lawmakers seek hearings [Back](#)

By Anthony Adragna | 04/23/2018 08:32 PM EDT

Scott Pruitt's wall of GOP support developed some new cracks on Monday, with three key Senate defenders calling for hearings into the embattled EPA administrator's recent controversies.

The three, including staunch Pruitt ally Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-Okla), all said they supported hearings by the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee to look into the former Oklahoma attorney general's actions.

"I think that a couple of us on the committee think it's appropriate to have a hearing in so far as any accusation having to do with his office is concerned," Inhofe told POLITICO.

Inhofe said he was troubled by [a report](#) over the weekend in The New York Times detailing a sweetheart deal Pruitt received on an Oklahoma City home previously owned by a lobbyist while serving in a state government. The Oklahoma Republican declined to discuss which allegations he found disturbing, but said "there are some things in there that I'd like to check out and see."

Joining his call for a Senate hearing were two other senior GOP members of the EPW panel, Sens. Shelley Moore Capito (W.Va.) and John Boozman (Ark.).

"Most people have concerns about some of the allegations," Boozman said. "At some point he'll be before the committee and we'll dig deeper and see exactly what's going on."

EPW Chairman John Barrasso (R-Wyo.) told reporters he expected Pruitt would come to testify at some point, but he stopped short of providing a specific timeframe or stating his intention to call a hearing.

To date, four House Republicans have called on Pruitt to resign, along with scores of elected Democrats. And Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine), has said Pruitt was "the wrong person" to lead the agency based on his policies.

Pruitt has drawn criticism about his ethics and lavish spending in recent months. Three Congressional committees, the White House and EPA's inspector general are all probing his behavior, ranging from his security expenses, high pay raises for aides, first-class travel and meetings with a coal group.

The House Oversight Committee has requested interviews with five senior agency aides and the White House said it would formally investigate Pruitt's expenses after the Government Accountability Office last week found EPA broke the law by failing to notify Congress about a \$43,000 privacy booth Pruitt had built in his office.

Pruitt will go to the Hill on Thursday to testify before a House Energy and Commerce subcommittee in the morning and at a House Appropriations subpanel in the afternoon. Those appearances will mark his first time before Congress since the recent allegations broke.

Both Inhofe and Capito said they thought those House hearings would prove pivotal for Pruitt's long-term future in the administration.

"It's really important," Capito said. "He's going to have to answer some tough questions. I'm sure they'll be put to him by both sides and we'll see what his response is."

Meanwhile, EPW ranking member Tom Carper (D-Del.) said he had a good conversation with House Oversight Chairman Trey Gowdy (R-S.C.) regarding Pruitt, but he said there was no formal bipartisan agreement to work together on an investigation.

"I just gave him plenty of encouragement that he's doing the right thing," he said.

But the mounting public criticism from Republicans suggests GOP lawmakers' patience in defending the EPA chief's behavior is waning.

"Some of the things that he's done and that he's been alleged to do are just indefensible," Sen. John Kennedy (R-La.) said. "You just can't put lipstick on those pigs. You can't."

*To view online [click here.](#)*

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**EPA emails show industry worries slowed new science policy** [Back](#)

By Annie Snider | 04/19/2018 05:01 PM EDT

EPA's rollout of a controversial new transparency policy that would severely restrict the scientific research the agency can rely on when drafting new regulations has been slowed down by political officials' fears that it could have major unintended consequences for chemical makers, according to newly released EPA documents.

The issue of scientific transparency has been high on the agenda of House Science Chairman [Lamar Smith](#) (R-Texas), who has found strong support from EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt — much to the consternation of public health advocates and green groups, who view the effort as backdoor attack on the agency's ability to enact environmental regulations.

Since Pruitt announced plans for the new policy last month, researchers and public health proponents have raised alarms that it could restrict the agency's ability to consider a broad swath of data about the effects of pollution on human health. But documents released under the Freedom of Information Act show that top EPA officials are more worried the new restrictions would prevent the agency from considering industry studies that frequently support their efforts to justify less stringent regulations.

Emails between EPA officials obtained by the Union of Concerned Scientists show that Nancy Beck, the top political official in the agency's chemicals office who came to the agency after serving as a key expert for the chemical industry's lead lobbying group, voiced major [concerns](#) after she received a draft of the not-yet-released policy on Jan. 31.

The new scientific transparency directive is expected to require that the raw data for all studies EPA relies on be publicly available, and that the studies be peer-reviewed. But Beck said these requirements would exclude a great deal of industry data about pesticides and toxic chemicals that her office considers when determining whether a substance is safe or must be restricted.

It costs companies "millions of dollars to do these studies," Beck wrote in an email to Richard Yamada, the political official in EPA's office of research and development who is spearheading work on the new scientific policy and is also a former staffer for the House Science Committee chairman.

"These data will be extremely valuable, extremely high quality, and NOT published," Beck wrote. "The directive needs to be revised."

Moreover, much of this data, Beck noted, is considered proprietary by companies. It is dubbed confidential business information, and even though EPA can consider it as part of its regulatory review, the data cannot legally be made public.

Yamada replied to thank Beck for the heads up. "Yes, thanks this is helpful - didn't know about the intricacies of CBI," he wrote. "We will need to thread this one real tight!"

The term "confidential business information" primarily applies to industry information. That data is separate from the personal medical information that public health researchers worry could block consideration of their work.

Yogin Kothari, a lobbyist for the Union of Concerned Scientists, said the emails show the Trump administration's EPA has been "trying to stack the deck in favor of the industries they're supposed to be regulating."

"They want to potentially create exemptions for industry, but if you look at this entire set of documents ... you will see that there's not a single consideration for the impacts on public health data, on long-term health studies, on studies that EPA does after public health disasters like the BP oil spill," he said.

EPA spokeswoman Liz Bowman emphasized the policy is not yet finalized.

"These discussions are part of the deliberative process; the policy is still being developed. It's important to understand; however, that any standards for protecting [confidential business information] would be the same for all stakeholders," she said in a statement.

The emails [indicate](#) Pruitt wanted the new science policy rolled out at the end of February, and teased his plans in an [interview](#) with conservative outlet The Daily Caller in mid-March. But the agency has yet to finalize the policy.

The transparency directive has its origins in legislation introduced by Smith during the Obama administration, that had the backing of a number of industry groups, including the American Chemistry Council. The House Science Committee chairman frequently charged that the Obama EPA used "secret science" to justify "costly new regulations."

Although versions of the measure were approved by the House multiple times, the Senate never took it up. CBO estimated that one version of Smith's legislation would cost EPA \$250 million a year, at least in the initial years, and a leaked staff response to questions from the budget office said a later version would be even more costly, would endanger confidential medical and business information, and "would prevent EPA from using the best available science."

But Smith found an ally in Pruitt. The emails [indicate](#) that Smith met with Pruitt in early January and show that Pruitt's staff quickly began working on a directive to "internally implement" the legislation.

Industry's backing for the new scientific approach began to waiver under the Trump administration, though. When a top American Chemistry Council scientist testified before Smith's committee in February 2017, she emphasized the need to protect industry information if the transparency initiative moved forward.

"One of the things that we do need to take into consideration as making that data publicly available is that there are adequate protections for confidential business information to ensure that we keep innovation and competitiveness available for the marketplace," Kimberly White told the committee.

Industry has historically claimed that a wide range of information about chemicals, ranging from the processes by which they are produced, to the locations of manufacturing plants, to their very identities, must be kept confidential in order to keep competitors from learning trade secrets. Environmental and public health advocates argue that industry claims this exemption in many cases where it's not necessary and that it often keeps important health and safety information from public view.

The issue was a key point of debate when Congress considered a major overhaul of the nation's primary chemical safety law passed 2016 and has reemerged as Pruitt's EPA sets about implementing the law.

Asked for comment on EPA's new effort to implement the scientific transparency approach internally, American Chemistry Council spokesman Scott Openshaw said the group looks forward to reviewing the directive once it's finalized.

"It is critical that any final directive properly protect confidential business information and competitive intelligence," he said in a statement.

The internal emails show that EPA political staff were particularly attuned to this concern. In a Feb. 23 [email](#) to colleagues, Beck forwarded language from a 2005 White House [document](#) that laid out narrow exemptions from its requirement that all "important scientific information" disseminated by the federal government go through peer review.

"[Y]ou may need to tweak but hopefully there is something helpful here that can be borrowed/adopted," she wrote.

Richard Denison, lead senior scientist for the Environmental Defense Fund, said that EPA's access to industry data is indeed important to its ability to review the safety of new chemicals and pesticides, but said the internal EPA communications show that Pruitt's EPA wants to "have their cake and eat it too" with the new directive.

"They're trying to force peer review studies done by academic scientists to disclose every last detail, while at the same time allowing industry studies to be kept private or aspects of those to still be kept private," he said.

He pointed out that the concerns Beck raised about the burden the new policy would place on industry are the very same ones that the CBO report said the policy would place on EPA.

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## **Poll: Coal baron Blankenship fading in W.Va. Senate primary** [Back](#)

By Alex Isenstadt | 04/23/2018 07:26 PM EDT

WHEELING, W.Va. — A new poll out Monday evening shows recently imprisoned coal baron and Senate hopeful Don Blankenship fading in the Republican primary, amid an avalanche of establishment attacks aimed at stopping him from winning the nomination.

With the primary two weeks away, the survey shows Blankenship, who spent a year in jail following the deadly 2010 explosion at his Upper Big Branch Mine, falling far behind his more mainstream rivals, GOP Rep. Evan Jenkins and state Attorney General Patrick Morrisey. The poll found Morrisey leading with 24 percent, followed by Jenkins with 20 percent, and Blankenship trailing with 12 percent. Thirty-nine percent were undecided.

The survey, which was conducted April 17-19 and has a margin of error of 4.9 percentage points, came as Blankenship squared off against his rivals in a 90-minute debate held at Wheeling Jesuit University. The candidates spent much of the evening aligning themselves with President Donald Trump, and beating up on Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin.

They will also meet on Tuesday, and again next week for a nationally televised debate hosted by Fox News.

The survey of 411 primary voters was commissioned by GOPAC, an organization that promotes state Republican legislators, and was conducted by National Research Inc., a polling firm that worked on Trump's 2016 campaign. Neither has taken sides in the primary.

National Republicans have scrambled to intervene in the contest, fearing that a Blankenship primary win would destroy their prospects of unseating Manchin. The 68-year-old former coal executive has spent nearly \$2 million of his own to fund a slash-and-burn style campaign savaging Jenkins and Morrisey as establishment pawns.

He has also sought to clear his name. Much of Blankenship's campaign has been geared toward portraying himself as the casualty of an Obama Justice Department bent on locking him up.

Fearful that Blankenship was gaining traction, Mountain Families PAC, a super PAC overseen by strategists close to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's political operation, swung back — airing around \$700,000 worth of TV ads in recent days accusing Blankenship of contaminating drinking water.

The effort to defeat Blankenship has gone further. Earlier this month, Trump flew to West Virginia to hold an event aimed at selling his tax reform legislation. The president was seated next to Jenkins and Morrisey, a clear attempt to promote their candidacies over Blankenship, who was not in attendance.

For national Republicans, the move was not without risk. Last year, a McConnell-aligned super PAC spent millions to stop Alabama Senate candidate Roy Moore from winning the nomination, only to see it backfire. Moore used it to cast himself as the victim of the establishment, and went on to win the primary before losing the general election in a stunning upset.

Blankenship is taking a similar approach. With the contest hurtling into the final stretch, he has begun airing commercials calling McConnell a "swamp creature."

And during a news conference on Monday morning, Blankenship pledged not to support McConnell as Senate GOP leader if he's elected.

"He needs to understand that if I'm there I will not vote for him for majority leader, and so the rest of the senators should understand that they should not put him up if they need my vote," he told reporters.

The candidates largely avoided attacking each other at Monday's debate, perhaps because three lesser-known contenders were also included onstage, a setup that limited the amount of speaking time.

Blankenship used the debate to further his argument against the establishment. He called the 2010 mine explosion "heart-wrenching," and called it "one of the worst days of my life."

But he blamed the disaster on the government, saying it had taken steps to limit the amount of airflow available to the miners.

During his closing remarks, Blankenship referred to Washington as the "district of corruption," and argued that politicians there often tried to make themselves look like they were fighting over ideals when they were merely posturing.

"When I go to D.C.," he said, "it won't be a fake fight, it will be a real fight."

With candidates and outside groups crowding the TV airwaves, much of the firepower is being directed at Jenkins, a second-term congressman who in 2014 defeated longtime Democratic Rep. Nick Rahall. All told, around \$1.2 million is expected to be spent against Jenkins, according to a media buyer.

Among those spending heavily against Jenkins is Duty and Country, an outside Democratic group with offices in Washington. To date the group has spent around \$380,000 on TV, the vast majority of it against Jenkins.

At Monday's debate, Jenkins argued that Democrats were trying to "meddle" in the primary. He said their attacks on him was proof that the opposing party viewed him as the biggest threat to Manchin.

The Democratic effort, he added, was unprecedented in West Virginia politics.

"They're scared to death of Evan Jenkins on the ballot in November because they know Evan Jenkins can beat Joe Manchin," the congressman said.

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## Court chooses salmon over hydropower in Columbia River fight [Back](#)

By Annie Snider | 04/02/2018 02:34 PM EDT

The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals has sided with the state of Oregon, the Nez Perce tribe and nearly a dozen conservation groups, ruling that hotly contested dam operations on the Columbia and Snake Rivers must forgo hydropower production during key times of the year in order to protect endangered salmon.

The three-judge panel [upheld](#) a lower court's decision requiring that water be spilled over the top of dams along the Columbia River System, including the powerhouse Grand Coulee dam, the largest power station in the U.S., during periods when young salmon and steelhead migrate to the ocean. The hydropower turbines pose a threat to the fish.

The Justice Department, representing the National Marine Fisheries Service, Army Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation, had argued that requiring such operations would cause electricity rates to spike and could threaten the reliability of the electrical grid.

The ruling stems from a years-long battle over the nearly 100-year-old hydropower system along the Columbia and Snake rivers. Conservation groups and tribes with treaty fishing rights want the system altered and operated to benefit wildlife, including calling for the removal of four dams along the Snake River. As part of that litigation, the federal agencies are also working on an environmental impact statement for the system that has been the subject of congressional fights, with Rep. [Cathy McMorris Rodgers](#) (R-Wash.) filing a measure ([H.R. 3144](#)) to void that process, and Democratic lawmakers [coming out](#) in opposition.

**WHAT'S NEXT:** Unless they successfully appeal the decision, the federal agencies will need to release water over the top of dams beginning this spring. The ongoing environmental impact statement process will continue.

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## Senate spending leaders vow to open up floor debate for amendments [Back](#)

By Sarah Ferris and Kaitlyn Burton | 04/23/2018 06:20 PM EDT

Senate Appropriations Chairman [Richard Shelby](#) is vowing to restore chamber-wide debate on amendments to individual appropriations bills to help end Congress' stop-and-go funding cycle.

Shelby (R-Ala.), along with his Democratic counterpart Sen. [Patrick Leahy](#), of Vermont, told committee members in a closed-door meeting today that leadership has agreed to allow amendments on the Senate floor for every individual spending bill.

"There is perhaps unanimity, but certainly strong consensus that if the appropriations process is going to work we're going to be casting votes on amendments and we stay here and we vote," Sen. [Jerry Moran](#) (R-Kan.) told reporters exiting the meeting, which was the committee's first bipartisan sit-down of fiscal 2019

"I think it's the single best way to restore the Senate the way the Senate's supposed to work. The full Senate gets a chance to offer a variety of amendments, and if you don't like it, you can vote against it," Sen. [Lamar Alexander](#) (R-Tenn.) added.

Shelby and Leahy have met with Majority Leader [Mitch McConnell](#) and Minority Leader [Chuck Schumer](#) in recent days about opening up the floor for debate on spending bills.

When asked if both leaders were on board, Shelby added: "They tell us they are, and I like to believe them." Leahy added: "We both talked with both of them. I think they both understand. The Senate can't go on like this."

It's a risky gambit, particularly in an election year. Contentious amendments have held up bills in both chambers in recent years.

Back in 2016, Senate Democrats [blocked](#) a largely noncontroversial Energy and Water bill because of a proposed amendment on Iran. In 2015, the House GOP's Interior-Environment bill was tripped up by an unrelated rider on the Confederate flag.

The number of amendments on Senate spending bills has [dropped dramatically](#) in the last two decades, as the chambers considers fewer and fewer individual bills.

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# POLITICO PLAYBOOK

Today's POLITICO Playbook presented by AARP

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## DRIVING THE DAY

**NEW THIS MORNING ... THE SPRING PLAYBOOK POWER LIST ...** This morning we are unveiling our latest POLITICO Power List, featuring 20 women who are having their moment in politics. Compiled with the help of our Playbook community in D.C., the states, London and Brussels, it's a look at operatives navigating the midterm elections to those negotiating the terms of Brexit and leading a nationwide gun control movement. These women will be leading the political discussion for years to come. **THE FULL LIST** <https://politi.co/2K7Xy6W>

... **Betsy Ankney**, Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner's campaign manager <https://politi.co/2K64KjV> ... Rep. **Nanette Barragán** (D-Calif) <https://politi.co/2K4uI7z> ... #MeToo cofounder **Tarana Burke** <https://politi.co/2K6Lmn1> ... San Francisco Board of Supervisors president and mayoral candidate **London Breed** <https://politi.co/2K6MB5F> ... RNC Committeewoman **Harmeet Dhillon** <https://politi.co/2K5rrEQ> ...

... Rep. **Barbara Comstock** (R-Va.) <https://politi.co/2K8bSMI> ... Gun control activist **Emma Gonzaga** <https://politi.co/2K8ZkVh> ... **Tessa Gould**, Sen. Heidi Heitkamp's (D-N.D.) chief of staff <https://politi.co/2K8Rr2k> ... Heritage Foundation President **Kay Coles James** <https://politi.co/2K7QXJI> ... **Shahira Knight**, deputy director for economic policy at the National Economic Council <https://politi.co/2K6Efe1> ...

... **Jessica Mackler**, independent expenditure director for the DCCC <https://politi.co/2K4yT34> ... European Union Trade Commissioner **Cecilia Malmström** <https://politi.co/2K8SFKY> ... New Jersey first lady **Tammy Murphy** <https://politi.co/2K5jEqI> ... **Parker Poling**, chief of staff in the office of the House Chief Deputy Whip Patrick McHenry <https://politi.co/2K7TnIi> ... **Monica Popp**, Senate Majority Whip John Cornyn's (R-Texas) chief of staff <https://politi.co/2K97xce> ...

... Boston City Councilor **Ayanna Pressley**, a candidate in Massachusetts seventh district <https://politi.co/2K7Z2hF> ... United Kingdom Home Secretary **Amber Rudd** <https://politi.co/2K94mkD> ... **Mercedes Schlapp**, White House director of strategic communications <https://politi.co/2K6GXjH> ... **Jackie Schutz Zeckman**, Florida Gov. Rick Scott's campaign manager for his Senate bid <https://politi.co/2K7XfsO> ... **Sabine Weyand**, deputy chief Brexit negotiator for the European Commission <https://politi.co/2K6Jnih>

**PLAYBOOK PREVIEW ... STEVE SCALISE**, who is recovering from surgery, is getting ready to launch a new joint-fundraising committee that will help him bring big dollars into GOP coffers ahead of the election. The committee will be called "Geaux Red." It's common for members of leadership to set up these accounts, which allow them to raise money efficiently for themselves, candidates and the party committee. This effort will allow Scalise to shuffle money to candidates who are "lagging behind their opponents." ...

... **BUT** everything Scalise does at this point is viewed by many of his colleagues as part of a tit for tat with **KEVIN MCCARTHY**, the No. 2 House Republican. Scalise endorsed McCarthy a few weeks ago to be the next top GOP leader. To be fair, to be in leadership is to be in constant competition with your colleagues about who is doling out more money.

**PALACE INTRIGUE ... RACHAEL BADE: WHERE THINGS STAND WITH CMR -- "The one woman in Republican leadership is under siege":** "If 2018 is the year of the woman, don't tell Cathy McMorris Rodgers. The lone female member of House Republican leadership is under siege in D.C. and back home in Washington state. In Congress, several fellow GOP members are pining for her job, questioning her effectiveness as chairwoman of the conference and weighing whether to challenge her. At the same time, McMorris Rodgers has suddenly found herself at risk of losing her seat altogether - a Republican in a blue-trending state with a Democratic wave potentially on its way.

**"But assuming she survives her own reelection,** Republicans will be hard-pressed to push McMorris Rodgers out of her post in leadership heading the conference's communications strategy. She still enjoys support from many Republicans and, more important, she's a prominent female

figure in a conference dominated by men: Only 9 percent of House Republicans are female." <https://politi.co/2HSE9Gp>

**RYAN'S REPLACEMENT?**, via the AP: "A former driver for House Speaker Paul Ryan who has been active in Wisconsin Republican politics for years announced Sunday he is running to succeed Ryan in Congress. Bryan Steil, an attorney from Ryan's hometown of Janesville and a member of the UW Board of Regents, becomes the likely Republican front-runner after the field of better-known potential candidates cleared for his entry." <http://bit.ly/2qTDyMp>

**THIS WEEK ... EMMANUEL MACRON** will address a joint session of Congress Wednesday. White House Correspondents Dinner is this weekend. Festivities begin Thursday night.

-- **BUT** this will take up lots of oxygen... **AP/LONDON: "Britain's Duchess of Cambridge in labor with 3rd child"** <http://bit.ly/2HjLulc>

**WSJ'S JESS BRAVIN** on **ROD ROSENSTEIN'S INTERESTING WEEK** ... "As if Rod Rosenstein's week hadn't been stressful enough, an unexpected package from the White House arrived Friday afternoon at his office at the Justice Department. He opened it carefully.

"**These are my official Donald Trump cuff links,' said a surprised Mr. Rosenstein**, the deputy attorney general. As the official overseeing Mr. Trump's bête noire, the special counsel probe of alleged Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election, Mr. Rosenstein isn't used to plaudits from the White House.

"**But the gift, sent by White House counsel Don McGahn**, recognized another duty Mr. Rosenstein is assuming Monday: representing the administration before the Supreme Court, where he will argue a sentencing case from New Mexico." <https://on.wsj.com/2F6YCEv>

-- **AP'S MARK SHERMAN: "Travel ban case is justices' first dive into Trump policy"**: "The Supreme Court has so far had little to say about Donald Trump's time as president, even as the nation has moved from one Trump controversy to another. That's about to change.

**"The justices' first deep dive into a Trump administration policy comes** in a dispute over the third and latest version of the administration's ban on travel from some countries with majority Muslim populations. Opponents of the policy and some lower courts have labeled it a 'Muslim ban,' harking back to Trump's campaign call to keep Muslims from entering the country. The high-stakes arguments at the high court on Wednesday could offer some indication about how a court that runs on respect for traditions and precedent will deal with a president who regularly breaks with convention." <http://bit.ly/2HSIE3L>

**NYT'S MARK LANDLER:** "[Barack] Obama will deliver a lecture to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Nelson Mandela, whom he eulogized after his death five years ago by saying he 'makes me want to be a better man.'" <https://nyti.ms/2vBt3mG>

**JOHN HARRIS** on **JAMES BENNET**: "**I Don't Like to Be Called a Nazi**": "James Bennet, the editor of the New York Times editorial page, lately has been waging his share of battles, which he no doubt would be enjoying more if he did not give a damn about rude things combatants say about him and his publication. But he does give a damn.

**"Bennet, whom I've known since we were both covering Bill Clinton's White House** , has faced a succession of social media uproars over the past year as he revamps and modernizes the Times opinion section. Even as the page has retained its historically liberal bearings, and regularly lacerates President Donald Trump, it is now regarded with suspicion by some loud voices on the left.

**"There was a backlash to Bennet's hiring of conservative columnist** Bret Stephens (who wrote skeptically about the evidence for manmade climate change), as well as to his abortive attempt to bring on tech writer Quinn Norton (the hiring was quickly reversed after Twitter posters exposed a friendship with a neo-Nazi). These and other moves by Bennet to enliven his pages caused such intense distress by some at the Times that, in recent months, he met with a group of aggrieved colleagues -- the transcript of which later leaked -- and wrote an all-staff memo that explained his philosophy of debate." <https://politi.co/2HRh1rC>

\*\*\*\*\* **A message from AARP:** There are 197 days until the 2018 midterm elections. You may be surprised to learn which voters are poised to have the most influence. STAY TUNED for an exciting announcement tomorrow in Playbook. \*\*\*\*\*

**IMPRESSIVE REPORTING ... THE GUARDIAN'S JON SWAINE:** "**Michael Cohen case shines light on Sean Hannity's property empire:** Fox News host who said Trump's fixer 'knows real estate' has a portfolio that includes support from Department of Housing and Urban Development, a fact he did not mention when interviewing secretary Ben Carson last year" <http://bit.ly/2qS9pNz>

**CONFIRMATION WATCH -- More than 100 retired military generals and admirals** have written a letter to the Senate Intelligence Committee, raising questions about Gina Haspel's nomination to be CIA director. Signers include nine former four-star generals, including the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General Hugh Shelton, former Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Charles C. Krulak, and former U.S. Surgeon General Vice Admiral Richard H. Carmona. ***The letter*** <http://bit.ly/2HjSxGE>

**HMM -- "Bolton chaired nonprofit that fanned anti-Muslim news amplified by Russia,"** by NBC News' Heidi Przybyla: "John Bolton, President Donald Trump's new national security adviser, chaired a nonprofit that has promoted misleading and false anti-Muslim news, some of which was amplified by a Russian troll factory, an NBC News review found. The group's authors also appeared on Russian media, including Sputnik and RT News, criticizing mainstream European leaders like French President Emmanuel Macron.

**"From 2013 until last month, Bolton was chairman of the Gatestone Institute,** a New York-based advocacy group that warns of a looming 'jihadist takeover' of Europe leading to a 'Great White Death.'"  
<https://nbcnews.to/2qS1eRr>

**THAW ON THE PENINSULA? -- "SKorea halts propaganda broadcasts before summit with North,"** by AP's Hyung-Jin Kim in Seoul: "South Korea halted anti-Pyongyang propaganda broadcasts across the rivals' tense border on Monday ahead of inter-Korean talks this week that are expected to focus on the North's nuclear program, Seoul officials said. Seoul had blasted anti-Pyongyang messages and K-pop songs from border loudspeakers since the North's fourth nuclear test in early 2016. Pyongyang quickly matched Seoul's campaign with its own border broadcasts and launches of balloons carrying anti-South leaflets across the border."  
<http://bit.ly/2vxsKJm>

**OK! -- "Cambridge Analytica Data Scientist Aleksandr Kogan Wants You To Know He's Not A Russian Spy,"** by BuzzFeed's Ryan Mac: "Aleksandr Kogan wants to set the record straight. 'I am not a Russian spy,' he tells BuzzFeed News aboard a Saturday evening flight to the British capital. On Tuesday, the Cambridge University researcher is set to testify here in front of a parliamentary committee that is looking to determine whether the political consulting firm Cambridge Analytica influenced global elections and the United Kingdom's Brexit vote. ...

**"[Brown] admitted that he did violate Facebook's developer policy** by harvesting user data and transferring it to a third party - but said that he was being unfairly pilloried as just one of many people who did this. In following up on the controversy, Facebook has vowed to find them all."  
<https://bzfd.it/2qOvBYW>

**WHAT PETER NAVARRO IS READING -- "Tariff Dodgers Stand to Profit Off U.S.-China Trade Dispute,"** by NYT's Keith Bradsher in Shanghai: "Want to avoid American tariffs? In China, a company called Settle Logistics says it knows a way. Specifically, that way goes through Malaysia - a 4,600-mile diversion compared with sending a shipping container from China straight across the Pacific to the United States.

**"But when those Chinese products arrive at an American port, they will look as if they had come from Malaysia, according to the company, and will be spared tariffs aimed at Chinese goods.**

... Such zigzagging routes are called transshipments, and President Trump has used them to justify the trade fight he has picked with a number of countries." <https://nyti.ms/2K7EENx>

**2018 WATCH -- "She's a lucky duck': GOP implodes again for McCaskill,"** by Daniel Strauss: <https://politi.co/2F6mech>

**BROOKE MINTERS TO POLITICO** ... Staff-wide email from Carrie Budoff Brown: "We're thrilled to announce that Brooke Minters, an enterprising journalist with a track record for developing innovative storytelling formats and striking visual features, is joining us as executive producer for video.

**"Brooke comes to us from Gizmodo Media Group where she oversaw** video strategy and production for a number of web properties including Splinter, Jezebel, The Root, Lifehacker and Deadspin. She previously was executive producer of explainers and short features at Fusion and a founding producer at AJ+, where she pioneered new story formats and produced everything from studio pieces to on-the-ground mobile reporting from Ferguson, Missouri. ...

**"Brooke will be taking charge of our video strategy across the newsroom,** from news and enterprise to Magazine and Pro. She'll join our talented video producers Beatrice Peterson and Reena Flores and lead the expansion of the team in the coming months."

**TRUMP'S MONDAY --** The president will have lunch with VP Mike Pence. Trump and first lady Melania Trump will greet and then plant a tree with French President Emmanuel Macron and his wife. The foursome will then head to Mount Vernon for a tour and dinner before returning to the White House.

**CEO CONVO --** Join POLITICO CEO Patrick Steel Thursday morning at 11:30 a.m. at the Newseum for a conversation with Steve Ballmer, former Microsoft CEO and founder of USAFacts, to talk data transparency, disruption in civic and business leadership, and the government's impact on society. **RSVP** <https://bit.ly/2qRMfHZ>

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## PLAYBOOK READS



**PHOTO DU JOUR:** President Donald Trump disembarks from Air Force One upon arrival at Joint Base Andrews on April 22. The president was returning from a week in Florida. | Olivier Douliery/Pool/Getty Images

**JUST POSTED -- "McMaster and Commander:** Can a national-security adviser retain his integrity if the President has none?" by The New Yorker's Patrick Radden Keefe: "When Trump assumed office, N.S.C. staffers initially generated memos for him that resembled those produced for his predecessors: multi-page explications of policy and strategy. But 'an edict came down,' a former staffer told me: ""Thin it out." The staff dutifully trimmed the memos to a single page. 'But then word comes back: "This is still too much." A senior Trump aide explained to the staffers that the President is "a visual person," and asked them to express points 'pictorially.' 'By the time I left, we had these cards,' the former staffer said.

**"They are long and narrow, made of heavy stock, and emblazoned with the words 'The White House' at the top.** Trump receives a thick briefing book every night, but nobody harbors the illusion that he reads it. Current and former officials told me that filling out a card is the best way to raise an issue with him in writing. Everything that needs to be conveyed to the President must be boiled down, the former staffer said, to 'two or three points, with the syntactical complexity of "See Jane run." ... When briefers prepared a card for [his Putin] call, one of the bullet points said, in capital

letters: 'DO NOT CONGRATULATE.'" *With cameos by Ken Pollack, Paul Yingling, Michèle Flournoy, John Nagl, Eliot Cohen, Seb Gorka* <http://bit.ly/2qRy0Cc>

**-- ANOTHER INTERESTING NUGGET:** "It was Senator Tom Cotton, of Arkansas, an Iraq War Army veteran, who had pitched McMaster to the Trump Administration. Cotton had gone to Harvard, and when he was a teaching assistant in a government class, one of his students was Jared Kushner."

**IF YOU READ ONE THING -- "Inside Jeff Bezos's DC Life:** The Amazon founder and Washington Post owner has quietly become a freewheeling DC socialite-and soon he'll be spending more time here, in the mammoth Kalorama home his family is renovating. ... The story of how the world's richest man is becoming a Washingtonian," by Ben Wofford in May's Washingtonian: "Bezos ... has been quietly moonlighting in a town that, friends say, he views as an everything city-a delta of diplomats and techies, military engineers and journalists, powerbrokers and problem solvers, a mélange perfectly suited to the tinkerer's heterodox taste.

"**Confidants report that Bezos spends more time** in Washington than in any other city outside of Seattle-ten trips a year, give or take-and for good reason. ... His infatuation with the nation's capital provokes its own riddle even among those who know him. 'It's a bit of a mystery to me-whether he has political ambitions or thinks he needs to be on the right side of Washington, for Amazon,' one friend of the Bezos family admits. Yet 'Bezos is attracted-like a moth to light-to Washington.' ... Sally Quinn, host of a thousand Washington dinner parties, calls an invitation from Bezos 'one of the most fun evenings I've spent in Washington in a long time.'"

<http://bit.ly/2HjgOwj>

**-- WHO KNEW?:** Ted "Leonsis would go on to become a sounding board for Bezos, who later relayed one of the reasons he'd left Wall Street: 'He said, "I had a competitor who was kicking my ass,'" Leonsis remembers. The prodigious rival: Bernie Madoff. 'So,' Bezos cracked to Leonsis, 'no Bernie Madoff, no Amazon.'"

**-- "Here Are the Floor Plans for Jeff Bezos's \$23 Million DC Home:** Forget HQ2-Bezos's Kalorama mansion has enough room for an entire Amazon outpost," by Washingtonian's Mimi Montgomery: The \$12 million renovation "project covers 191 doors (many either custom mahogany or bronze), 25 bathrooms, 11 bedrooms, five living rooms/lounges, five staircases, three kitchens, two libraries/studies, two workout rooms, two elevators-and a huge ballroom."

<http://bit.ly/2qSvEDO>

\*\*\*\*\* **A message from AARP:** There are 197 days until the 2018 midterm elections. You may be surprised to learn which voters are poised to have the most influence. STAY TUNED for an exciting announcement tomorrow in Playbook. \*\*\*\*\*

**KUSHNER INC. - "Kushner Companies offers \$250M for Park Ave. co-op,"** by N.Y. Post's Steve Cuozzo: "Kushner Companies, reeling from a cash hemorrhage at 666 Fifth Ave. and vexed by multiple governmental investigations, is audaciously trying to stake a claim on Park Avenue, The Post has learned. The real estate giant previously run by presidential adviser Jared Kushner has offered \$250 million to buy out an entire luxury co-op building - fabled 417 Park Avenue, which until recently was the only residential address on the glamorous boulevard between Grand Central Terminal and 57th Street." <https://nyp.st/2HjCZGP>

**BEYOND THE BELTWAY ... NYT'S SHANE GOLDMACHER AND J. DAVID GOODMAN:** **"Inside One of America's Ugliest Political Feuds: Cuomo vs. de Blasio":** "The idea of Mr. de Blasio and Mr. Cuomo ever collaborating on anything seems almost unfathomable nearly 16 years later. The two Democrats are now engaged in a feud so nasty, petty and prolonged that even in the cutthroat politics of New York, few can remember ever seeing anything quite like it. The two men have sparred over substance, silliness and everything in between: public housing and private workout routines, homelessness and topless women in Times Square, taxing millionaires and euthanizing a deer, a Legionnaires' disease outbreak and state troop deployments, schools, snowstorms and the subways - even naps." <https://nyti.ms/2qQhnYi>

**MEDIAWATCH - "She Tried To Report On Climate Change. Sinclair Told Her To Be More 'Balanced,'"** by BuzzFeed's Steven Perlberg: "Sinclair Broadcast Group executives reprimanded and ultimately ousted a local news reporter who refused to seed doubt about man-made climate change and 'balance' her stories in a more conservative direction. ... [Suri Crowe] faced discipline for social media posts and restrictions in reporting on guns, white nationalism, and Liberty University, she said. ... Overall, the documents provide an unusually close look at one reporter's experience working for a Sinclair station, and how the smallest details mattered and were recorded." <https://bzfd.it/2F8S4Fb>

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## PLAYBOOKERS

**SPOTTED:** Tucker Carlson at Chicago's O'Hare airport on the 9 p.m. United plane to D.C. ... Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Louise Linton, U.S. Ambassador to France Jamie McCourt and Eli and Jenna Miller having dinner on Sunday night at Cafe Milano

**OUT AND ABOUT --** The "New Women's Network," a new group focused on bringing together women chiefs of staff and their industry counterparts on a monthly basis, hosted a happy hour

Friday with women chiefs of staff and health care operatives. **SPOTTED:** Raven Reeder, Rachael Bornstein, Tasia Jackson, Rhonda Foxx, Donna Cassutt, Wendy Sussman, Joy McGlaun, Lauren Aronson, Sohini Gupta, Kristin Murphy, Elizabeth Murray, Rachel Magnuson, Monica Massaro, Jennifer Fisher and Ashli Palmer.

**SPOTTED** at Rita Braver's 70th birthday party at the Four Seasons Saturday: husband Bob Barnett, Dan Rather, Jonathan Silver and Melissa Moss, Tamera Luzzatto and David Reiter, Joseph Califano, Ann Nazareth and Roger Ferguson, Lloyd and Ann Hand, David Kendall and Ann Kendall, Leslie Stahl, David and Katherine Bradley, Denise Grant and Frank Raines, Calvin and Jane Cafritz, Brendan Sullivan, Douglas and Heidi Rediker, Tom Nides, Bob Woodward and Elsa Walsh, Tamara Buchwald, Peter Reid, Catherine Reynolds, Ann Stock, David Rubenstein, Adrienne Arsht, Francesca Craig, Sally Quinn and Carol Melton.

**ENGAGED -- Daniel Schwarz**, director of strategic comms for House Judiciary Committee Democrats and communications director for Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.), proposed to **Jamie Geller**, senior adviser and comms director for Rep. Joaquin Castro (D-Texas) and alum of House Foreign Affairs. The couple met on a Codel to Israel. *Pic* <http://bit.ly/2Hj9PUk>

**WEEKEND WEDDING -- TED DOOLEY**, the executive director of the College Republican National Committee, and **NICOLE PACIELLO**, deputy chief of staff to New York Rep. Lee Zeldin, got married at Wequassett Resort and Golf Club in Chatham, Massachusetts. They met in College Republicans. *Pic* <http://bit.ly/2HRfGkF> **SPOTTED:** Rep. Lee Zeldin (R-N.Y.) and his wife Diana, Alex Smith, Gus Portela, Julia Hoy, Chandler Thornton, Massachusetts State Rep. Shawn Dooley, Eric Amidon, Clinton and Joanna Soffer, Ross Hemminger, Bryan Watkins, Megan Dutra, Kaitlyn Martin, Sinead Casey, Patrick Griffin, Alyssa Farah, Justin Griffin, Pat Griffin and Rob Oliver.

**WELCOME TO THE WORLD - Cally Baute**, VP and general manager of POLITICO, and **Scott Stolbach**, a PA-C at GWU Hospital, email friends and colleagues: "Please meet the newest member of our family: William Manning Baute, 8lb 12oz, and a whopping 23in long! He arrived [Thursday] afternoon, and everyone is doing great. His big sister is smitten, as are Mom and Dad." *Pics* <http://bit.ly/2HICH2j> ... <http://bit.ly/2HiPZwo> ... <http://bit.ly/2Fb655u>

**BIRTHWEEK (was yesterday):** Seth Samuels, chief analytics officer at the Messina Group.

**BIRTHDAY OF THE DAY:** Tim Lim, founder of Lim Consulting, who got interested in politics when "'The West Wing' premiered ... in high school and I vowed to become a Korean Josh Lyman." **A trend he thinks deserves more attention:** "Republicans in down ballot races spent 3X to 4X more on digital than Democrats in 2016 and most of the resources and support for Democratic digital efforts go towards fundraising." **Read his Playbook Plus Q&A:** <https://politi.co/2Ho3DhJ>

**BIRTHDAYS:** John Oliver is 41 ... Kal Penn is 41 (hat tip: Nick Troiano) ... filmmaker-author Michael Moore is 64 ... Hadar Susskind, SVP of government relations at the Council on Foundations ... Gideon Lett, VP of political affairs and strategic partnerships at TechNet (h/ts Tim Burger and Peter Cherukuri) ... Daniel Eldredge ... Terrence Clark, deputy comms director for Bob Casey for Senate ... Gus Portela, director of external affairs and operations for the Hispanic Leadership Fund (h/t Alex Schriver) ... Politico's Cory Bennett and Blend Qatipi ... Neil Strauss, digital director at Republican Jewish Coalition (h/t Matt Brooks) ... Aaron Huertas ... Pili Tobar, managing director at America's Voice ... Ted Trippi ... Bridget Grace Matticola ... Gideon Bender ... Kegan Beran ... Clarine Nardi Riddle, No Labels co-founder and former chief of staff and current law partner at Kasowitz to former Sen. Joe Lieberman (h/t Dennis Craig) ...

... **Kindred Motes**, digital strategy director at the Vera Institute of Justice, is 28 (h/ts Wei Soo and Jasmine Heiss) ... Alex Johnson ... Darien Flowers, special assistant in the office of the under secretary for policy at DOT ... Jennifer Smith of Chevron's policy, government and public affairs team ... Alexis Kleinman, tech editor at Mic ... Edelman's Amy Wainwright ... Doug Brake ... Aerin Lauder Zinterhofer is 48 ... Alex Swieca is 26 ... Therese Smith Burch ... Tom Robinson is 32 ... James Michel ... Michael Celler ... Paula Dwyer, editor at Bloomberg QuickTakes ... Therese Burch ... Rep. Norma J. Torres (D-Calif.) is 53 ... Rep. Fred Upton (R-Mich.) is 65 ... Ohio State Rep. Cliff Rosenberger is 37 ... WNYC's Beth Fertig ... Josh Kriegman (h/t Barbara Morgan) ... Andrew Brent ... Justin White ... Martha Laning ... Mitchell Whiteman ... Tanya Melich ... Tom Russell ... Richard Bender (h/ts Teresa Vilmain)

\*\*\*\*\* **A message from AARP:** There are 197 days until the 2018 midterm elections. You may be surprised to learn which voters are poised to have the most influence. STAY TUNED for an exciting announcement tomorrow in Playbook. \*\*\*\*\*

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**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] US Department of the Interior in the News: 1461 New Results

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<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #555; border-radius: 50%;"></span>	Social	<b>1417</b>

## Department of Interior - Top...

44 results

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**New Haven Register** (2 other sources) • USA • Apr 26 • 5:20 pm

University fined for violating Indian remains law

and artifacts in its possession. The U.S. **Department of the Interior** notified Marshall University President Jerome Gilbert of the fine in ...

Reach 138k

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## Rep. Ken Calvert could slam Scott Pruitt and Ryan Zinke. Why hasn't he?

him purse-string influence over the Environmental Protection Agency and [Department of the Interior](#). But going into Thursday, April 26,

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## Marshall fined for violating federal law over Indian remains

and artifacts in its possession. The U.S. [Department of the Interior](#) notified Marshall President Jerome Gilbert of the fine this week.

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## CORRECTION -- Route1 Reports 2017 Fourth Quarter and Full Year Financial Results

U.S. Department of the Navy, the U.S. [Department of the Interior](#), and other government agencies. The Company is also trusted by enterprise

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## Don't let developers degrade this historic Underground Railroad stop | Opinion

and national history. In April of 2017, the United States [Department of the Interior](#), National Park Service, Northeast Region, issued a

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## The Donald Trump Cabinet Tracker

the headlines, that stumble could easily blow over. **Department of the Interior**  
Trump's pick: Former Representative Ryan Zinke of Montana

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## Hear the sound of a predator species invading Louisiana

According to a study by the U. S. Geologic Survey of the **Department of the Interior**, Cuban treefrogs appear to have "hitched a ride" on som...

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## Social



@USFWS @Interior @USFWS @realDonaldTrump help them●● <https://t.co/5vOgc2Z0am>

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RT @Interior: Need an amazing pic to get through the day?  
This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by Sidney Cromer #

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 **Surinderjit Singh** @sjsrana Apr 27 • 6:44 am

@VP @FBI @CIA @OCCRP @HumanRightsNews  
@amnesty @IntlCrimCourt **@Interior** @GooglePlus  
@AsimBajwaISPR @pid\_gov @googlepolitics  
@pressfreedom @

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 **ELIYAHU** @RosenthalEllery ITA • Apr 27 • 6:44 am

@NOMOREorg @ActivistPost @rapevictimadv  
@FreedomofPress @IntlCrimCourt @INTERPOL\_HQ  
**@Interior** @FBI @CIA @ISDOJ\_GLOBAL @GovernmentRF  
@

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 **ELIYAHU** @RosenthalEllery ITA • Apr 27 • 6:43 am

@NOMOREorg @ActivistPost @rapevictimadv  
@FreedomofPress @IntlCrimCourt @INTERPOL\_HQ  
**@Interior** @FBI @CIA @ISDOJ\_GLOBAL @GovernmentRF  
@

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 **Bangnguyenba** @BNguyenba VNM • Apr 27 • 6:42 am

**@Interior** @BuzzFeed ok thank you

Reach 2

Tag • Translate • Share



Michelle R. @Feymich USA · Apr 27 · 6:41 am

RT @Interior: Stay for stargazing @YellowstoneNPS to be WOWed! The #MilkyWay over Grand Prismatic Spring by David Lane #FindYourPark <https://>

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Charlie Brady @Troutsteriii USA · Apr 27 · 6:36 am

RT @Interior: Need an amazing pic to get through the day? This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by Sidney Cromer #

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Leta @runrgirl\_leta USA · Apr 27 · 6:29 am

RT @Interior: Need an amazing pic to get through the day? This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by Sidney Cromer #

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Kathys License Svc @KathysLicense USA · Apr 27 · 6:27 am

RT @Interior: 10 things everyone should pack for a hike in a national park #FindYourPark <https://t.co/7VlgWkoJYI>

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binner from the box @snookman342244 Apr 27 · 6:21 am

@Uber @googledrive @ICEgov @sscarguy @brucejudd  
@doioig @Interior @librarycongress @MissingKids  
@HCSOSheriff @DCPoliceDept @Hagerty @

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 **J. A. Garfield NHS** @GarfieldNPS USA • Apr 27 • 6:20 am

RT [@Interior](#): Need an amazing pic to get through the day?  
This should do the trick: A bear cub  @GreatSmokyNPS by  
Sidney Cromer #

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 **Beryl Mordecai-Brown** @richwithright USA • Apr 27 • 6:16 am

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Sidney Cromer #

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 **Surinderjit Singh** @sjsrana Apr 27 • 6:07 am

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@cbc @cbs @abc @afp @FoxNews @ajam Motion of

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@wef @IntlCrimCourt @INTERPOL\_HQ [@Interior](#) @cctv  
@cbc @cbs @abc @afp @FoxNews @ajam Motion of

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 **Surinderjit Singh** @sjsrana Apr 27 • 6:04 am

@NOMOREorg @ActivistPost @rapevictimadv  
@FreedomofPress @IntlCrimCourt @INTERPOL\_HQ  
@Interior @FBI @CIA @ISDOJ\_GLOBAL @GovernmentRF  
@

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 **Tara Obrien** @TaraObri Apr 27 • 6:00 am

RT [@Interior](#): Need an amazing pic to get through the day?  
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Sidney Cromer #

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 **Wanderlusting Enthusiast** @\_Wanderlusting USA • Apr 27 • 5:55 am

RT [@Interior](#): National Park Week continues with one of our  
favorite #Alaska parks: @LakeClarkNPS #FindYourPark  
<https://t.co/JktbOHtQue>

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 **Rambo Adams** @RamboadamsAmber USA • Apr 27 • 5:55 am

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Sidney Cromer #

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 **Zachary Goelman** @zgoelman USA • Apr 27 • 5:44 am

RT @Tahtone: After six months at the [@Interior](#), Bryan Rice, director for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, has resigned. No reason was given. No

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 **Falcon PR Feisty Boricua** V

#ThrowThemOut @thepowerofmeow GBR • Apr 27 • 5:43 am

RT @mitchmerry: HBO's John Oliver mocks [@Interior](#) Secretary Ryan Zinke as 'deeply strange' 'weirdo'  
<https://t.co/rHzXFWgF7g> via [@GFTribune](#)

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 **Outdoor Heir** @OutdoorHeir USA • Apr 27 • 5:42 am

RT [@Interior](#): Need an amazing pic to get through the day?  
This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 [@GreatSmokyNPS](#) by Sidney Cromer #

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 **Robert Cho** @RobertCho20 KOR • Apr 27 • 5:41 am

RT [@Interior](#): Need an amazing pic to get through the day?  
This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 [@GreatSmokyNPS](#) by Sidney Cromer #

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 **Lorraine @\_Elrick09** Apr 27 • 5:34 am

RT **@Interior**: Ozark National Scenic Riverways is a great place to paddle a canoe or take a springtime hike. Pic by Pamela Reid #Missouri #

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 **Baughbe Harwatton @bobharwatton** USA • Apr 27 • 5:31 am

**@Interior** @GreatSmokyNPS That adorable look that says "my mom is standing right behind you"

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 **RJMnatureprotect54 @RamonaM80127165** USA • Apr 27 • 5:15 am

RT **@Interior**: Need an amazing pic to get through the day? This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by Sidney Cromer #

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 **Teddie Ryan @trscoobs** Apr 27 • 5:08 am

RT **@Interior**: Need an amazing pic to get through the day? This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by Sidney Cromer #

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 **artista blue skies smiling @artistablue007** Apr 27 • 5:06 am

RT **@Interior**: Need an amazing pic to get through the day? This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by Sidney Cromer #

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 **alipiosmith** @alipiosmith USA • Apr 27 • 4:58 am



RT **@Interior**: Need an amazing pic to get through the day?  
This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by  
Sidney Cromer #

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 **Kathy corneliussen** @Kathycornelius8 Apr 27 • 4:57 am



**@Interior** @GreatSmokyNPS I agree

Reach 3

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Kathy corneliussen** @Kathycornelius8 Apr 27 • 4:55 am



**@Interior** @GreatSmokyNPS That sucks

Reach 3

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Kathy corneliussen** @Kathycornelius8 Apr 27 • 4:54 am



**@Interior** @GreatSmokyNPS Leave wild life alone

Reach 3

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Tania Gonzalez** @TaniaGlezAZ USA • Apr 27 • 4:53 am



RT **@Interior**: 10 things everyone should pack for a hike in a  
national park #FindYourPark <https://t.co/7VlgWkoJYI>

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Mike Archer @JamesMArcher USA • Apr 27 • 4:47 am

RT @RiveraSunAuthor: "The US Department of the Interior's new four-year strategic plan calls for maximizing fossil fuel extraction from

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Sarwono Sulmu @Sulmu Sekar Apr 27 • 4:46 am

RT @Sulmu Sekar: @FLOTUS @WhiteHouse @Interior Save EARTH with INCOME. 1. LOCAL COMMUNITY DEV. Tourism 2. VARIOUS RENEWABLE ENERGY &

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Josephine Mitford @minsquish Apr 27 • 4:25 am

RT @idarose7777: @Interior Urge Congress to reject The King Amendment to the Farm Bill #HR4879 Authored By Rep Steven King Iowa & support

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Lady Aimee @Lady\_Aimee USA • Apr 27 • 4:19 am

RT @Interior: Need an amazing pic to get through the day? This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by Sidney Cromer #

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Rivera Sun @RiveraSunAuthor MEX • Apr 27 • 4:19 am

"The US Department of the Interior's new four-year strategic plan calls for maximizing fossil fuel extraction from public lands " This

Reach 26k

Tag • Translate • Share



 **ndngenuity** @ndngenuity USA • Apr 27 • 4:00 am

RT @ForeverLogical: **@Interior** @NatlParkService U.S. Interior agency speeds up process to lease oil, gas on federal land <https://t.co/>

Reach 2k

Tag • Translate • Share



 **ndngenuity** @ndngenuity USA • Apr 27 • 4:00 am

RT @ForeverLogical: **@Interior** @NatlParkService A leaked draft of a five-year plan reveals how the DOI will prioritize “energy dominance”

Reach 2k

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Albert Coleman** @albertandrewco1 Apr 27 • 3:58 am

RT **@Interior**: Need an amazing pic to get through the day? This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by Sidney Cromer #

Reach 108

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Mazi Patrick** @patrick\_mazi MYS • Apr 27 • 3:57 am

RT @NwaBiafraKalu: @USFWSMtnPrairie @SecretaryZinke **@Interior** @USFWS The gross Violation of human rights of Indigenous people of #Biafra

Reach 180

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Mazi Patrick** @patrick\_mazi MYS • Apr 27 • 3:57 am

RT @NwaBiafraKalu: [@Interior](#) [@BLMNational](#) [@BLMca](#) [@JoshuaTreeNPS](#) [@NatlParkService](#) [@BadlandsNPS](#) The gross Violation of human rights of

Reach 180

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Mazi Patrick** @patrick\_mazi MYS • Apr 27 • 3:57 am

RT @NwaBiafraKalu: [@Interior](#) [@YellowstoneNPS](#) The gross Violation of human rights of Indigenous people of #Biafra seeking #BiafraReferendum #

Reach 180

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Mazi Patrick** @patrick\_mazi MYS • Apr 27 • 3:57 am

RT @NwaBiafraKalu: [@AstroKarenN](#) [@Interior](#) [@NatlParkService](#) [@BadlandsNPS](#) [@Space\\_Station](#) The gross Violation of human rights of Indigenous

Reach 180

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Mazi Patrick** @patrick\_mazi MYS • Apr 27 • 3:57 am

RT @NwaBiafraKalu: [@YellowstoneNPS](#) [@Interior](#) [@TRooseveltNPS](#) [@USGrantNPS](#) The gross Violation of human rights of Indigenous people of #Biafra

Reach 180

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Cheryl Walker** @cherlywakler Apr 27 • 3:53 am

RT [@Interior](#): Serene summer day on Bear Lake @RockyNPS by Tom Wood #Colorado #FindYourPark  
<https://t.co/cltfDEdB59>

Reach 47

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Matthew Wolfe** @mwolfe808 USA • Apr 27 • 3:49 am

RT [@Interior](#): Need an amazing pic to get through the day?  
This should do the trick: A bear cub  @GreatSmokyNPS by  
Sidney Cromer #

Reach 1k

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Matthew Wolfe** @mwolfe808 USA • Apr 27 • 3:49 am

RT [@Interior](#): 10 things everyone should pack for a hike in a  
national park #FindYourPark <https://t.co/7VlgWkoJYI>

Reach 1k

Tag • Translate • Share



 **wanda r pearson** @wandarpearson Apr 27 • 3:45 am

RT [@Interior](#): 10 things everyone should pack for a hike in a  
national park #FindYourPark <https://t.co/7VlgWkoJYI>

Reach 419

Tag • Translate • Share



 **mel gorby** @melgonorth USA • Apr 27 • 3:44 am

[@Interior](#) @GreatSmokyNPS WHAT A GREAT PIC, HE'S SO  
TINY AND CUTE.

Reach 57

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Chris Liu** @ChrisLovesParks USA • Apr 27 • 3:36 am

RT [@Interior](#): Need an amazing pic to get through the day?  
This should do the trick: A bear cub  @GreatSmokyNPS by  
Sidney Cromer #

Reach 32

Tag • Translate • Share



 **MARYJANE01** @maryjane0003 IRN • Apr 27 • 3:32 am

@NOMOREorg @ActivistPost @rapevictimadv  
@FreedomofPress @IntlCrimCourt @INTERPOL HQ  
**@Interior** @FBI @CIA @ISDOJ GLOBAL @GovernmentRF  
@

Reach 3k

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Bonita** @BonitaCanadian Apr 27 • 3:32 am

RT @DelaneyMarsco: There's some trouble at **@Interior**, and it starts at the top. If you want a run-down of all the ways in which @

Reach 196

Tag • Translate • Share



 **U.S. Embassy Lisbon** @USEmbPortugal PRT • Apr 27 • 3:29 am

RT **@Interior**: Need an amazing pic to get through the day? This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by Sidney Cromer #

Reach 6k

Tag • Translate • Share



 **HorololoForSongOfTheYear** @TreyAndExoPlz Apr 27 • 3:26 am

RT **@Interior**: Need an amazing pic to get through the day? This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by Sidney Cromer #

Reach 100

Tag • Translate • Share



John S L.E.S. @NYEntertain USA • Apr 27 • 3:23 am



RT @Interior: Free entrance to all national parks on April 21 to celebrate the start of National Park Week. Retweet to spread the word! #

Reach 8k

Tag • Translate • Share



NWWell @PortlandWell USA • Apr 27 • 3:20 am



RT @Interior: Need an amazing pic to get through the day? This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by Sidney Cromer #

Reach 28

Tag • Translate • Share



MARYJANE01 @maryjane00003 IRN • Apr 27 • 3:20 am



@NOMOREorg @ActivistPost @rapevictimadv  
@FreedomofPress @IntlCrimCourt @INTERPOL\_HQ  
@Interior @FBI @CIA @ISDOJ\_GLOBAL @GovernmentRF  
@

Reach 3k

Tag • Translate • Share



USGOVignorance @USGOVignorance RUS • Apr 27 • 3:18 am



@NOMOREorg @ActivistPost @rapevictimadv  
@FreedomofPress @IntlCrimCourt @INTERPOL\_HQ  
@Interior @FBI @CIA @ISDOJ\_GLOBAL @GovernmentRF  
@

Reach 2k

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Dorte Johst Jensen** @DorteJohst DNK • Apr 27 • 3:18 am

RT **@Interior**: Need an amazing pic to get through the day?  
This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by  
Sidney Cromer #

Reach 134

Tag • Translate • Share



 **sergcs77@gmail.com** @CoutinhoMX CAN • Apr 27 • 3:14 am

, #Meade el gran perdedor, me pasaron una encuesta privada  
que prendió las alarmas al@interior del equipo de campaña  
del PRI <https://t.co/>

Reach 62

Tag • Translate • Share



 **hellgirl** @Nintendette USA • Apr 27 • 3:11 am

RT **@Interior**: Need an amazing pic to get through the day?  
This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by  
Sidney Cromer #

Reach 774

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Plate4congress** @plate4congress USA • Apr 27 • 3:01 am

@westerncaucus **@Interior** **@SecretaryZinke** **@RepTipton**  
**@repdonyoung** **@RepNewhouse** **@RepWesterman**  
**@RepLizCheney** **@RepRalphNorman** **@RepAbraham** @

Reach 15

Tag • Translate • Share



 **M M Smith** @snowshoehare USA • Apr 27 • 3:01 am

#endangered delta smelt on verge of extinction, meanwhile  
#Congress, **@Interior** and **@SecretaryZinke** are taking them  
to the brink : <https://t>.

Reach 106

Tag • Translate • Share



 **dean shamblen** @DeanShamblen USA • Apr 27 • 2:59 am



RT [@Interior](#): Need an amazing pic to get through the day?  
This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by  
Sidney Cromer #

Reach 123

[Tag](#) • [Translate](#) • [Share](#)



 **Anne Brooke Books** @AnneBrookeBooks GBR • Apr 27 • 2:59 am



RT [@Interior](#): Ozark National Scenic Riverways is a great  
place to paddle a canoe or take a springtime hike. Pic by  
Pamela Reid #Missouri #

Reach 22k

[Tag](#) • [Translate](#) • [Share](#)



 **Goonie Skywalker** @Proud2bGoonie Apr 27 • 2:55 am



RT [@Interior](#): Need an amazing pic to get through the day?  
This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by  
Sidney Cromer #

Reach 23

[Tag](#) • [Translate](#) • [Share](#)



 **OrcaAlley** @orca\_alley Apr 27 • 2:54 am



RT [@Interior](#): Need an amazing pic to get through the day?  
This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by  
Sidney Cromer #

Reach 37

[Tag](#) • [Translate](#) • [Share](#)



MrMuroMath @MuroMath Apr 27 • 2:53 am

RT @Interior: 10 things everyone should pack for a hike in a national park #FindYourPark <https://t.co/7VlgWkoJYI>

Reach 15

Tag • Translate • Share



Viviana Howell @Viviana22495961 Apr 27 • 2:49 am

join me, and the @humaneSociety's petition urging @SecretaryZinke, @Interior and the @USFWSIntl to keep the elephant trophy import ban

Reach 0

Tag • Translate • Share



Surinderjit Singh @sjsrana Apr 27 • 2:47 am

@ActivistPost @rapevictimadv @AFP @liongeelani786 @IntlCrimCourt @INTERPOL\_HQ @Interior @FBI @CIA @ISDOJ\_GIOBAL @GovernmentRF @AsimBajwaISPR

Reach 251

Tag • Translate • Share



Surinderjit Singh @sjsrana Apr 27 • 2:46 am

@NOMOREorg @ActivistPost @rapevictimadv @FreedomofPress @IntlCrimCourt @INTERPOL\_HQ @Interior @FBI @CIA @ISDOJ\_GIOBAL @GovernmentRF @

@

Reach 251

Tag • Translate • Share



oliver binkhorst @obinkhorst USA • Apr 27 • 2:46 am

RT @Interior: Need an amazing pic to get through the day? This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by Sidney Cromer #

Reach 11k

Tag • Translate • Share



 **No soul** @oliviaglad1 Apr 27 • 2:43 am



RT **@Interior**: Celebrate National Park Week with these top alternatives to popular parks: <https://t.co/dbRsKrAJRc> #FindYourPark <https://t.co/>

Reach 280

Tag • Translate • Share



 **HappyToBeBlue ❤️** @MonsterMarcia USA • Apr 27 • 2:40 am



RT **@DelaneyMarsco**: There's some trouble at **@Interior**, and it starts at the top. If you want a run-down of all the ways in which **@**

Reach 15k

Tag • Translate • Share



 **css** @SL\_OKC Apr 27 • 2:39 am



@Uber @googledrive @ICEgov @sscarguy @brucejudd  
@doioig **@Interior** @librarycongress @MissingKids  
@HCSOSheriff @DCPoliceDept @Hagerty @

Reach 5k

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Yaaboosucks** @YaaBooSux Apr 27 • 2:37 am



**@Interior** Is the overripe Banana obligatory, because I don't like overripe Bananas... and where was the chocolate, the matches/lighter,

Reach 7

Tag • Translate • Share



D @Neptune3b Apr 27 • 2:30 am

RT @Interior: National Park Week continues with one of our favorite #Alaska parks: @LakeClarkNPS #FindYourPark <https://t.co/JktbOHtQue>

Reach 185

Tag • Translate • Share



Hamza Shaban @hshaban USA • Apr 27 • 2:25 am

RT @Interior: Need an amazing pic to get through the day? This should do the trick: A bear cub 🐻 @GreatSmokyNPS by Sidney Cromer #

Reach 5k

Tag • Translate • Share



Elizabeth Caporuscio @lizarrd55 Apr 27 • 2:21 am

RT @Interior: 10 things everyone should pack for a hike in a national park #FindYourPark <https://t.co/7VlgWkoJYI>

Reach 194

Tag • Translate • Share



Matt Dieterich @MattDieterich USA • Apr 27 • 2:21 am

Check out my Milky Way timelapse film! #MilkyWay @NatGeo @Interior @seattletimes @GettyCreativity @NikonUSA <https://t.co/WB9ADtkguA>

Reach 230

Tag • Translate • Share



埃瓦里斯托 (MR = M. Rajoy) @Sine\_Prudentia USA • Apr 27 • 2:07 am

sentencias MAS JUSTAS. @DolorsMM @justiciagob @PPopular @martinezmaillo @RafaCatalaPolo @pablocasado\_ @interior <https://t.co/X2I4CMzco7>

Reach 85

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Kiki Nomikou** @kiki\_nomikou GBR · Apr 27 · 2:04 am

RT [@Interior](#): We're celebrating bats and all they do for humans: <https://t.co/MCXvwldmn3>  Bats eat their body weight in insects  Bats

Reach 197

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Mary Plakidas** @MPlakidas USA · Apr 27 · 2:00 am

RT [@Interior](#): Need an amazing pic to get through the day? This should do the trick: A bear cub  [@GreatSmokyNPS](#) by Sidney Cromer #

Reach 29

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Marta ARTEaga** @martaARTEagaF Apr 27 · 2:00 am

#cursoadistancia CURSO DESBLOQUEO Y DESPERTAR CREATIVO DE TU NIÑO [@ INTERIOR](#) ESENCIAL 10% descuento PARA LA PRIMERA PERSONA QUE ESCRIBA: "MAYO

Reach 167

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Paige Smith** @pmm526 Apr 27 · 1:57 am

RT [@Interior](#): Need an amazing pic to get through the day? This should do the trick: A bear cub  [@GreatSmokyNPS](#) by Sidney Cromer #

Reach 3k

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Surviving** @esvalle Apr 27 • 1:43 am

RT **@Interior**: Half of the park is after dark with amazing night skies! Stay for stargazing at these 16 awesome public lands—you won't regret

Reach 616

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Carolyn Thompson** @Caro Thompson USA • Apr 27 • 1:43 am

RT **@Interior**: Need an amazing pic to get through the day? This should do the trick: A bear cub  @GreatSmokyNPS by Sidney Cromer #

Reach 864

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Penelope Cellucci** @PeneCell USA • Apr 27 • 1:40 am

RT **@Interior**: Need an amazing pic to get through the day? This should do the trick: A bear cub  @GreatSmokyNPS by Sidney Cromer #

Reach 500

Tag • Translate • Share



 **RobbPShuttleworth** @RPShuttleworth Apr 27 • 1:39 am

Dakotan calling for the resignation/ dismissal of our Gov, Sec of **@Interior** and Park leadership that set the backfires in high winds AGAINST

Reach 7

Tag • Translate • Share



 **Jbooh5** @Jbooh5 Apr 27 • 1:38 am

RT **@realDonaldTrump**: The **@WhiteHouse** is partnering with **@Interior** and **@NatlParkService** to bring the **@NSCsafety**'s "Prescribed to Death"

Reach 239

Tag • Translate • Share



 Linda Brooks Rix @LindaBrooksRix Apr 27 • 1:34 am

RT [@Interior](#): Need an amazing pic to get through the day?  
This should do the trick: A bear cub  @GreatSmokyNPS by  
Sidney Cromer #

Reach 188

Tag • Translate • Share



 Girolamo Iadicicco @giro1967 Apr 27 • 1:31 am

RT [@Interior](#): Epic views, amazing stargazing and a moment  
of solitude: All found at Birds of Prey National Conservation  
Area in #Idaho #

Reach 51

Tag • Translate • Share



 kirk murphy @kirkmurphy Apr 27 • 1:29 am

RT [@hannahjwaters](#): FOIA'd emails suggest that [@Interior](#)  
chose to delay listing endangered species at the request of oil  
and gas lobbyists:

Reach 3k

Tag • Translate • Share



 Lea Stewart @LeaStewart20 USA • Apr 27 • 1:26 am

[@Interior](#) [@GreatSmokyNPS](#) <https://t.co/ZzavFP8kwU>

Reach 145

Tag • Translate • Share



 Lea Stewart @LeaStewart20 USA • Apr 27 • 1:25 am

RT [@Interior](#): Need an amazing pic to get through the day?  
This should do the trick: A bear cub  @GreatSmokyNPS by  
Sidney Cromer #

Reach 145

Tag • Translate • Share



 Luis Gomez Jr @childofGodlu9 USA · Apr 27 · 1:25 am



RT [@Interior](#): 10 things everyone should pack for a hike in a national park #FindYourPark <https://t.co/7VlgWkoJYI>

Reach 307

Tag • Translate • Share



 Elvis Wang @ElvisWang6 CHN · Apr 27 · 1:20 am



: 2018 William T. #Pecora Award Nominations Accepted through June 15, 2018. [@Interior](#) [@NASA](#) Landsat <https://t.co/Wg1mR9lmMz>  <https://t.co/>

Reach 258

Tag • Translate • Share



 Penny Graham @SnufflePuffBaby Apr 27 · 1:16 am



RT [@Interior](#): National Park Week continues with one of our favorite #Alaska parks: [@LakeClarkNPS](#) #FindYourPark <https://t.co/JktbOHtQue>

Reach 5k

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**From:** Laura Rigas <laura\_rigas@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 23, 2018 9:18 AM  
**To:** (b)(6) - Ryan Zinke  
**Subject:** Fwd: [EXTERNAL] U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Monday, April 23, 2018

Laura Keehner Rigas  
Communications Director  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
(202) 897-7022 cell  
{@Interior}

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**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Monday, April 23, 2018

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**DATE: MONDAY, APRIL 23, 2018 6:00 AM EDT**

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- Southwest Colorado Journal: Utah BLM Sells Oil And Gas Leases Near Hovenweep.
- Rawlins (WY) Times: BLM Looking For Public Response On Right-of-way For Proposed Transmission Line.
- Durango (CO) Herald: Officials Attend Renaming Event For Canyons Of The Ancients Center.
- East Idaho News: BLM Offering Cash Reward After Tires Are Stolen From Government Facility.
- KIVI-TV Boise (ID): 500 Volunteers Turn Out For BLM Cleanup.

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- E&E Publishing: This Patch Of Heaven Emerges As Anti-government Hotbed.
- NBC: Every Year, 22 Million Pounds Of Plastic Winds Up In Great Lakes.
- Associated Press: Man Gets Prison For Selling Stolen Black Rhinoceros Horn.

## **National Park Service**

- USA Today: National Park Week Begins April 21 With Free Admission.
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- Florence (AL) Times Daily: Grant To Fund Civil Rights Study Project.
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- Today's Events In Washington.

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- Late Night Political Humor.

## DOI in the News

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### Interior Rejected Staff Advice When Scuttling Tribes' Casino.

[Politico](#) (4/22, Juliano) reports that Trump Administration officials "rejected recommendations from federal experts on Indian gaming policy when they blocked two American Indian tribes from opening a casino in Connecticut last year, documents obtained by POLITICO indicate." The "heavily blacked-out documents" raise "questions about whether Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and his political appointees buckled to lobbying pressure from MGM Resorts International, a gambling industry giant that is planning its own casino just 12 miles from the project proposed by

the Mohegan and Mashantucket Pequot tribes." Interior's inspector general is "investigating the department's handling of the tribes' casino application," said a spokeswoman, "after Connecticut lawmakers asked the internal watchdog to look into the matter."

Additional coverage was provided by [The Hill](#) (4/22, Greenwood).

**Deputy Interior Secretary Met With Lobbyist For A Casino His Former Firm Also Represents.** The [Huffington Post](#) (4/20, Vardi) reports that Interior Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt "met last fall with a lobbyist for MGM Resorts, the casino giant that his former employer also represents, according to calendar records." The article says that "according to the ethics agreement Bernhardt signed on May 1, 2017, he is prohibited from participating in matters involving his previous employer, the lobbying firm Brownstein Hyatt Farber & Schreck." However, "according to Bernhardt's calendar, Bernhardt met last October with Gale Norton, the former Interior Secretary under George W. Bush who now runs her own lobbying shop, Norton Regulatory Strategies. At the time of the meeting, Norton registered to lobby the Interior Department on behalf of a single client: MGM." Both Norton and Bernhardt "denied discussing MGM, telling HuffPost that the meeting was merely a 'social visit.'"

### **Top Interior Official Key To Delaying Protection For An Endangered Species.**

[The Hill](#) (4/20, Green) reports that "a top Interior Department employee with ties to the energy industry took credit for delaying the endangered species designation for a species of mussel, internal emails between the official and an industry trade group show." According to internal emails released in a public records request, "two weeks after Vincent DeVito and Secretary Ryan Zinke met with officials with the Independent Petroleum Association of America (IPAA), an industry trade group, Devito began corresponding with an IPAA staffer about delaying the listing of the species." In August, "less than month following their correspondence," the Fish and Wildlife Service "chose to delay the listing of the Texas hornshell mussel."

Also reporting are [The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (4/20, Tobias), [Pacific Standard](#) (4/20, Tobias), and [Inhabitat](#) (4/20, Beach).

### **Trump's Latest Plan For Saving Coal Comes From The Cold War.**

[Bloomberg Business](#) (4/19, Dlouhy) reports Sen. Joe Manchin addressed a letter to President Trump on Wednesday urging the Trump administration to employ a Cold War-era statute in order "to keep struggling coal and nuclear power plants online." Currently, the Trump administration is searching for a way to support the coal and nuclear power industry in a way that "can survive scrutiny from the courts and independent energy regulators." Officials in the Trump administration "have not decided on precisely how they might use the statute to help coal and nuclear plants – if they even chose to do so," but "assistance could come in the form of loans and loan guarantees or purchase commitments with the potential for direct payments to facilities."

[The Hill](#) (4/19, Green) reports the Trump administration "is considering implementing the 68-year-old Defense Production Act, which was first passed by Congress in the midst of the Korean War as a way to nationalize an energy industry necessary in times of war." In a letter to the Trump administration on the possible use of the statute, Manchin said, "The security of our homeland is inextricably tied to the security of our energy supply. ... The ability to produce reliable electricity is critical to ensuring our nation's security against the various threats facing us today – whether those threats be extreme weather events or adversarial foreign actors."

Additional coverage was provided by [E&E Daily](#) (4/19).

### **NJ Governor Signs Bill To Block Offshore Drilling.**

[The Hill](#) (4/20, Cama) reports New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy on Friday "signed into law...a bill meant to block offshore drilling for oil and natural gas in state-controlled waters." The Hill says that the legislation "is meant as a direct rebuke to the Trump administration's proposal to allow drilling off of nearly all of the nation's coasts, including off of New Jersey." The Hill adds that Friday marked "the eighth anniversary of the BP Deepwater Horizon explosion, which killed 11 workers and set off an 87-day oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico."

Also reporting are [NJ News](#) (4/20, Johnson), the [North Jersey \(NJ\) Media Group](#) (4/21, Racioppi), and the [AP](#) (4/20, Parry).

### **Environmentalists Ask Court To Restore Oil-Gas Emission Rule.**

The [AP](#) (4/21) reports a coalition of 13 environmental groups on Friday asked a federal appeals court in Denver "to reinstate a rule restricting harmful methane emissions on U.S. lands, at least temporarily." The AP says that "the rule required energy companies to capture methane gas instead of burning it or wasting it at drilling sites on public lands." The AP adds the Administration is trying to reverse the rule, which was enacted by the Obama Administration in 2016.

Additional coverage was provided by the [Denver Post](#) (4/20, Nicholson).

### **Interior Attorney: It's Easier To Adopt Regs Than To Repeal Them.**

The [Grand Junction \(CO\) Daily Sentinel](#) (4/23, Webb) reports that "efforts under the Trump administration to repeal and replace Department of Interior regulations are made more challenging by a legal structure more designed to impose new regulations, an Interior attorney says." Speaking at the Sixth annual Energy and Environment Symposium, Matthew McKeown, regional solicitor for the Rocky Mountain Region of Interior, said, "All of the structure of federal environmental law was designed to go forward, not backward." He explained, "So when you try to go backward with something under administrative processes you run into all sorts of challenges because the people who designed it – Congress and the rule makers – that's not what they meant to do."

### **America Before Earth Day: Smog And Disasters Spurred The Laws Trump Wants To Undo.**

The [New York Times](#) (4/21, Albeck-Ripka, Pierre-Louis) reports that "on April 22, 1970, millions of people throughout the country demonstrated on the inaugural Earth Day, calling for air, water and land in the country to be cleaned up and protected," and the result was the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency and passage of the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act. However, the Times says the Trump Administration "has made eliminating federal regulations a priority, and an increasing number of environmental rules are under threat." The Times then highlights "five environmental disasters that shifted the public conversation and prompted, directly or indirectly, lawmakers to act."

## **Bureau of Indian Affairs**

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### **Conn. Gambling Bills In Limbo As Legislative Session Nears End.**

The [AP](#) (4/21, Haigh) reported that it is not clear if Connecticut's state legislature will pass a bill leading to expanded gambling in the state before it concludes for the year. MGM Resorts is continuing to lobby "legislators to approve a competitive process for a casino."

## **Bureau of Land Management**

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### **Airport Courts Flight To D.C.**

The [Grand Junction \(CO\) Daily Sentinel](#) (4/22, Harmon) reports that "trying to leave as little to chance as possible in the effort to lure the Bureau of Land Management headquarters, Grand Junction Regional Airport officials approached air carriers about offering a nonstop connection from Grand Junction to Washington, D.C." Airport Executive Director Angela Padalecki "told the Airport Authority board this week that she had contacted airlines in hopes of enticing one that would provide direct service between Grand Junction and the nation's capital, where some 300 BLM employees work in the national office."

### **Trump Administration Approves Oil Drilling, Pipeline In Carrizo Plain National Monument.**

The [San Luis Obispo \(CA\) Tribune](#) (4/20, Vaughan) reports "a new oil well and small pipeline has been approved in the Carrizo Plain National Monument on an old oil well that had been slated for restoration, to the dismay of conservation groups." The conservation "groups are challenging the approval and say the project falls short of the high environmental standards required to drill on protected lands." E&B Natural Resources Management Corp. "proposed drilling a new well on an existing lease on a half-acre site within the Russell Ranch Oil Field." The project, approved by the Bureau of Land Management, "would use an existing road and pad located at the base of the Caliente Mountains along the western boundary of the national monument." [KCBX-FM](#) San Luis Obispo, CA (4/20, Mart) reports it's "the first oil production activity the federal government has approved in the Carrizo Plain area since it was designated a national monument in 2001."

### **59,000 Acres To Be Offered In Lease Sale.**

The [Grand Junction \(CO\) Daily Sentinel](#) (4/21, Webb) reports that the Bureau of Land Management on Friday "said it plans to offer nearly 59,000 acres in Rio Blanco, Moffat, Jackson and Routt counties at its quarterly Colorado oil and gas lease sale June 7." The announcement "drew opposition from conservation groups who claim the Trump administration is subjecting the plans to inadequate environmental review, including when it comes to ozone and other air-quality impacts in the region." The public has "until April 30 to protest the sale of any of the parcels being offered."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Craig \(CO\) Daily Press](#) (4/20).

### **Utah BLM Sells Oil And Gas Leases Near Hovenweep.**

The [Southwest Colorado Journal](#) (4/20, Mimiaga) reports that the Utah Bureau of Land Management has "sold oil and gas leases near Hovenweep National Monument, despite requests by monument officials to defer them to protect archaeological and natural resources." In March, the article says, "43 parcels totaling 51,400 acres in southeastern Utah were sold for oil and gas development for \$1.5 million." The National Park Service "requested that 13 of the parcels located within 15 miles of Hovenweep National Monument units be deferred, according to an Oct. 23 comment letter on the BLM lease sale plan," but "the request was denied."

### **BLM Looking For Public Response On Right-of-way For Proposed Transmission Line.**

The [Rawlins \(WY\) Times](#) (4/20, Bennett) reports that the Bureau of Land Management is seeking public input "on building and upgrading a transmission line within Carbon County." The BLM Wyoming Rawlins Field Office on Tuesday "published a press release explaining its proposal of the new and improved 230-kV transmission lines that will stretch approximately 17.7 miles as a part of the 230-kV Interconnectors project."

### **Officials Attend Renaming Event For Canyons Of The Ancients Center.**

The [Durango \(CO\) Herald](#) (4/22, Alderton) reports that "the Anasazi Heritage Center was renamed the Canyons of the Ancients Visitor Center and Museum during a ceremony on Saturday." According to the article, "museum volunteers, Bureau of Land Management staff, Ute Mountain Ute tribal members, representatives from Congress and interested locals gathered at the center north of Cortez for the official renaming and the unveiling of a new sign." Marietta Eaton, manager of Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, "said the new name will make clearer the connection between the center and the monument."

### **BLM Offering Cash Reward After Tires Are Stolen From Government Facility.**

[East Idaho News](#) (4/20) reports that the Bureau of Land Management is "offering a \$500 reward for information leading to the prosecution of the individual(s) who illegally removed several tires from a government facility." According to the article, "the incident occurred sometime between April 12 and April 16, when an individual bypassed the secured chain link fence and entered the Salmon Field Office's wareyard." The cost "to replace the tires and ratchet straps damaged in the incident" is estimated at \$1,407. Linda Price, Salmon Field Manager, said, "This is a very unfortunate incident that is going to slow our work down. I am hopeful we can track down the responsible party."

### **500 Volunteers Turn Out For BLM Cleanup.**

[KIVI-TV](#) Boise, ID (4/21) reports that the Bureau of Land Management on Saturday "held a large-scale trash cleanup of the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area." The article says that "at Least five hundred volunteers participated in the cleanup efforts." Event organizer Amanda Hoffman "said this was one of the most extensive trash cleanups in Idaho."

## **Bureau of Reclamation**

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### **Possible Theft At Mammoth Fossil Site Investigated.**

The [AP](#) (4/22) reports that "authorities are investigating possible theft from a site in northwest Wyoming where the apparent skeletal remains of an ancient mammoth were found." Carlie Ronca, Wyoming area manager for the Bureau of Reclamation, "says the site might have been disturbed before it was reported to the agency last week." The remains were "uncovered and found by a hiker after the level of Buffalo Bill Reservoir was lowered as part of normal operations." The Bureau of Reclamation and Wyoming's archaeologist are "working to remove the fossils before the reservoir rises from spring snowmelt."

### **Water Managers Warn Of Rising Levels On The Pecos River.**

The [AP](#) (4/21) reports that "federal water managers are warning that levels on the Pecos River in eastern New Mexico are expected to rise as the Bureau of Reclamation moves water downstream for farmers." The release from Sumner Reservoir will start Monday. The Carlsbad Irrigation District has "called for about 10,000 acre-feet of water to be released from storage."

## **Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement**

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### **Cantwell Introduces Legislation To Protect American Coasts From Catastrophic Oil Spills.**

The [San Juan \(WA\) Islander](#) (4/21) reports that Sen. Maria Cantwell last week "introduced the Clean Coast Act that codifies rules that were finalized by the Department of the Interior in 2016 to address key safety recommendations made after the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster." Cantwell said, "President Trump has ordered the roll back of common sense solutions to improve safety and

prevent oil spills. Friday marks the eighth anniversary of the Deepwater Horizon disaster and today I have introduced legislation to prevent tragedies like that from happening again."

## **Fish and Wildlife Service**

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### **Federal Funding Bill Would Authorize Kodiak Land Swap.**

The [AP](#) (4/21) reports that "legislation to fund the U.S. Coast Guard includes a rider that would protect a small Alaska island in exchange for opening up a plot of tideland on Kodiak Island for development." The provision introduced by Sen. Dan Sullivan "would authorize the swap of the federally owned land in Womens Bay for Ayakulik Island, a nearly 11-acre (4.4-hectare) patch off the southwestern coast of Kodiak Island." Ayakulik Island, "which is currently owned by a private company, would be handed over to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for conservation under the measure."

### **This Bat Is The First To Make It Off The Endangered Species List. Celebrate With A Shot Of Tequila.**

The [Washington Post](#) (4/21, Fears) reports that the lesser long-nosed bat will be "the first bat species to be removed from the endangered list." Officials recently announced "that there are now an estimated 200,000, following an all-out effort to save them by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, acting with the Mexican government, schools, conservationists and various other partners." Scott Richardson, "a Fish and Wildlife biologist who specializes in bats," said, "It's pretty exciting, a pretty big deal." He added, "For me, it's exciting because it's been a perfect example of partnerships. Game agencies, schools, tequila growers, a ton of people who have been involved over the last 30 years. We wouldn't be where we are today without the tremendous partnerships."

### **Minnesota Congressman's Effort De-List Wolves Stuck In Congress.**

The [Duluth \(MN\) News Tribune](#) (4/20, Myers) reports that Rep. Collin Peterson "says he has the votes on the House floor to pass a bill removing federal protection for gray wolves across the Great Lakes region," but "he just can't get the bill to the floor." According to the article, "part of the problem lies in Peterson's party, with Republican majority rules not allowing a Democrat's bill to the floor that is controversial." When Peterson "tried to get a Republican to take the bill over, he didn't find any takers." Moreover, "even if Peterson's bill passes the House on its own it's unlikely to advance in the Senate, he conceded." However, "at least a House vote would make it more likely to be included in 'one of the must pass bills they need to get through' later this year, he said."

### **Dale Bumpers White River National Wildlife Refuge Seeks Public Comments On Proposed Increase To Permit Fee.**

The [Stuttgart \(AR\) Daily Leader](#) (4/22, Colvin) reports that Dale Bumpers White River National Wildlife Refuge is "seeking public comment on a proposal to increase the permit fee for the Refuge." The [Arkansas Democrat Gazette](#) (4/22, Hendricks) reports that refuge manager Charles "Bo" Sloan, is requesting a \$25 fee for "all consumptive and some recreational activities that occur on the [R]efuge." According to Sloan, "80 percent of the proceeds from the additional \$25 fee will be used on the White River National Wildlife Refuge for maintenance, operations and administrative costs."

### **Major Additions In The Works For Texas' Public Lands.**

The [Houston Chronicle](#) (4/22, Tompkins) reports that "a pair of land transactions in opposite corners of Texas promise to expand the amount of public lands and public hunting, along with fishing and other outdoor recreation opportunities in the state." According to the article, "the transactions will protect almost 20 square miles of some of the most critically imperiled wildlife and fisheries habitat in Southeast Texas and add 25 square miles of Rio Grande-bordering Trans-Pecos landscape to the state's largest wildlife management area." Earlier this month, The Conservation Fund "transferred an 8,169-acre parcel of the 12,376-acre Sabine Ranch in Jefferson County to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service." The land "becomes part of the adjacent 59,000-acre McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge." Also, "at its May 24 public meeting in Lubbock, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission will vote on a proposal to begin the process of purchasing a 16,000-acre tract of land in Brewster County from the Texas General Land Office." The land would be "added to the adjacent Black Gap Wildlife Management Area."

### **This Patch Of Heaven Emerges As Anti-government Hotbed.**

[E&E Publishing](#) (4/20, Yachnin) reports that "critics of federal land management, including Nevada rancher turned gubernatorial candidate Ryan Bundy" planned to gather in a "remote area west of Las Vegas to rally for the movement's newest cause célèbre: Patch of Heaven." According to the article, "the 40-acre Christian camp sits within Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge and once held baptisms in a stream – until the government diverted the water." The article says that "both Bundy's campaign and the libertarian website Lysander Spooner University" planned to "host events to highlight the long-running legal battle being fought by the camp's owner, a Nevada-based church called Ministerio Roca Solida."

### **Every Year, 22 Million Pounds Of Plastic Winds Up In Great Lakes.**

[NBC Nightly News](#) (4/20, story 9, 2:05, Holt) broadcast on "a major wake-up call" on the water quality of the Great Lakes, where "some 22 million pounds of plastic is dumped" every year, or "11 million" pounds a year in Lake Michigan alone. NBC Nightly News reported that "tiny plastic microbeads" and other microplastics can then break down from trash in the Great Lakes and move up the food chain.

### **Man Gets Prison For Selling Stolen Black Rhinoceros Horn.**

The [AP](#) (4/22) reports that "a Louisiana man has been sentenced to six months in prison for selling a stolen black rhinoceros horn to undercover federal agents, according to court records." U.S. District Judge Donald Walter "also on Tuesday sentenced Patrick Dylan Drawl, 31, of Lake Charles, to one year of supervised release after his prison term ends."

## **National Park Service**

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### **National Park Week Begins April 21 With Free Admission.**

[USA Today](#) (4/20) reports that the National Park Service "waived entrance fees to all parks on April 21, the first day of National Park Week." The article notes that "in 2016 and before, entrance was free for the entire National Park Week, but the free days were shortened in 2017 to just two weekends, and then again for 2018 to only the first day of the celebratory week."

Also reporting are the [Arizona Republic](#) (4/20, Craven), [Fox News](#) (4/20, Puhak), [CNN](#) (4/20, Hetter), [Money](#) (4/21, Tuttle), [WRC-TV Washington](#) Washington (4/21, Jones), and [KEVN-TV Rapid City \(SD\)](#) Rapid City, SD (4/21, Cummings).

### **Many Lose Jobs After National Park Service Changes Interpretation Of Seasonal Work Rule.**

[Government Executive](#) (4/20, Wagner) reports that a reinterpretation of a rule by the National Park Service has led to many seasonal workers losing their jobs. According to the article, "regional offices have been enforcing the change, which has not been formally announced, by stripping workers of their rehire status, which allows managers to bring back past seasonal workers without going through the competitive hiring process." Advocates for the affected workers also claim enforcement has "been inconsistent and retroactive."

### **Grant To Fund Civil Rights Study Project.**

The [Florence \(AL\) Times Daily](#) (4/22, Singleton-Rickman) reports that "three University of North Alabama professors have secured a \$45,000 grant to research the civil rights struggle in the Shoals." The [Florence \(AL\) Times Daily](#) (4/21, Singleton-Rickman) reports that "the plan includes the establishment of a website featuring history, imagery and video content from the civil rights struggle in the Shoals; significant research involving UNA undergraduate and graduate students; and a K-12 history curriculum supplement for elementary, middle and high school students." The grant was awarded through the Interior Department and the National Park Service.

### **University Of Arizona, Park Service Try To Save West's Historic Buildings.**

The [Arizona Daily Star](#) (4/22, Garcia) reports that "a hole in a 218-year-old building in Tumacácori National Historical Park, the result of rain that's affecting the building's adobe structure," is "the focus of a new study by a University of Arizona team." The team, made up of "six UA experts hailing from a variety of disciplines, and three National Park Service members, is studying how environmental stressors affect cultural resources in the West." According to the article, "funded by a \$100,000 grant from the National Park Service, the team is embarking on a three-year study of the inter-mountain West region of the NPS, which includes Montana, Wyoming, Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Utah, New Mexico and Arizona."

### **Tour Of Catoctin Mountain Helps German Peers Grow Young Park.**

The [AP](#) (4/22, Hogan) reports that Catoctin Mountain Park and Schwarzwald National Park in Germany this month "plan to sign an agreement officially designating them as sister parks." The National Park Service welcomed German officials "to tour Catoctin Mountain Park this week to exchange management and marketing techniques that the federal agency has refined over the last century." According to Catoctin Mountain Park Superintendent Rick Slade, "similar information-sharing missions were completed in Germany in years past."

### **Changes To Come At Denali National Park This Summer.**

The [AP](#) (4/21, Capps) reports that Denali National Park visitors this summer will find the park is trying "to streamline and help visitors find their way around the front country more easily." The changes are "the result of park administration anticipating a federal budget cut and not knowing what the actual budget would be, until recently." According to Miriam Valentine, chief of external affairs for the park, "although the final budget numbers ended up being about the same as last year, the changes will result in more efficiency for everyone."

### **Controlled Burn Held At Manassas Battlefield Park To Restore Civil War Landscape.**

[NPR](#) (4/20, Campbell) reports the Manassas National Battlefield Park conducted a prescribed burn "intended to maintain the look of the area as Civil War soldiers would have known it." The National Park Service "says it waited for ideal weather conditions to spark the blaze last week on 60 acres of Brawner's Farm where soldiers fought on Aug. 28, 1862, during the Battle of Second

Manassas." The NPS "says among the winners of the controlled burn are creatures including Northern bobwhite and American woodcock whose habitat benefits from the brush clearing."

### **Jockey Hollow Hosts Revolutionary War Encampment.**

The [Morristown \(NJ\) Daily Record](#) (4/21, Ruse) reports that "on Saturday and Sunday, the National Park Service hosts the Grand Encampment at Jockey Hollow, their largest special event of the year." According to the article, "thirty-six re-enactors from New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Connecticut, Vermont and Massachusetts came together to focus on the life and times of soldiers and civilians during the Revolutionary War."

### **UWF Historic Trust Unveils Maritime Murals.**

The [Pensacola \(FL\) News Journal](#) (4/22) reports that the University of West Florida Historic Trust "announced the completion of the installation of two maritime-themed murals in downtown Pensacola." The project was "made possible by a \$26,630 grant from the National Park Service and technical assistance from the UWF Department of History, the UWF Archaeology Institute and the Florida Public Archaeology Network."

### **Children Dig In At Junior Archaeologist Event At Harriet Tubman Park In Auburn.**

The [Auburn \(NY\) Citizen](#) (4/22, Rocheleau) reports that the National Park Service hosted a junior archaeologist event at the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park. During the event, park employees "guided children through a 'dig' and recorded their observations."

## **Insular and International Affairs**

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### **Interior Department Releases Comprehensive List Of First Quarter 2018 Accomplishments.**

The [Los Alamos \(NM\) Daily Post](#) (4/17) reports that the Interior Department has "released a comprehensive list of 2018 first quarter accomplishments." Of note to Insular Affairs, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "announced an expanded role for the Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs, expanding the role to include ocean activities and international affairs." Also, Assistant Secretary Doug Domenech "traveled to the Virgin Islands to provide \$2.8 million in grants for rebuilding infrastructure and utilities after the hurricanes."

### **GDOE To Get More Federal Funds, 'Highly Confident' In Managing Its Own Money.**

The [Pacific \(GUM\) Daily News](#) (4/23, Eugenio) reports that U.S. Insular Affairs Assistant Secretary Doug Domenech and Office of Insular Affairs Director Nik Pula are "on Guam to check on the status of a \$5 million, five-year U.S. Department of the Interior funding for public schools' school safety and maintenance programs," Superintendent Jon Fernandez said. On Monday morning, Domenech and Pula "visited Southern High School, which is among the recipients of Interior funds."

### **Asst Seceretary Praises Patriotism And Commitment Of AS.**

The [Talanei \(ASM\)](#) (4/17) reports that in his keynote speech for Flag Day 2018, Assistant Secretary for International Insular Areas Doug Domenech "highlighted American Samoa's patriotism and commitment to the American Family." Domenech also "spoke about his experience since arriving in the territory last Thursday night on his first official visit."

Additional coverage as provided by [Marianas Variety](#) (4/19).

## **Attorney General's Office Applies For Grant To Develop Compact Impact Counting Methods.**

The [Pacific \(GUM\) Daily News](#) (4/21, Stole) reports that "the Office of the Attorney General recently submitted a grant application to the federal government, looking to develop ways to accurately capture the island's costs for hosting migrants under the Compacts of Free Association." According to Attorney General Elizabeth Barrett-Anderson "if approved, the methodology established through the project could help officials make a stronger case for federal reimbursement for compact-impact costs." Jacqueline Cruz, chief of staff for the AG's office, "said the office applied for \$266,500 from the Department of Interior's Office of Insular Affairs' fiscal 2018 Technical Assistance Program."

## **No 'Plan B' For Workforce Crisis.**

[Marianas Variety](#) (4/19, Villahermosa) reports that Gov. Ralph D.L.G. Torres "said there is no 'plan B' for the islands' worker shortage because he is still optimistic that the U.S. Congress will pass the Northern Mariana Islands U.S. Workforce Act or S. 2325." Torres said, "I just hope we can move forward and pass the bill that Sen. Lisa Murkowski introduced. I am hopeful that once it's passed and enacted into law, it will alleviate some of the workforce issues we are experiencing. I also hope that the companies that are already being affected by the CW cap won't be affected that much. I hope it doesn't shut down these companies or significantly reduce their operation while we are still waiting for the passage of the bill."

## **China Parades New 'Guam Killer' Nuclear Missile Capable Of Reaching US Territory And Destroying Aircraft Carriers.**

[The Sun \(UK\)](#) (4/17, Cox) reports that China has "paraded a new nuclear missile which could be capable of hitting a US territory and sinking aircraft carriers." According to the article, "the 'Guam Killer' warheads are capable of travelling 2,000 miles – far enough to blitz Guam in the Pacific Ocean."

## **For Balance, Australia Aims To Draw The UK Back Into The Pacific.**

In a piece for the [Diplomat](#) (4/19, Wyeth) reports, Grant Wyeth writes that "the United Kingdom has an extensive Pacific legacy, but there's room and demand for increased engagement and aid." However, "with both major political parties in the U.K. being either captured by, or in thrall to, more insular and revisionist sentiments, there must be concerns about the country's reliability." Wyeth writes that "increased cooperation with former colonial states in the South Pacific, as well as a desire to create a stronger naval presence in the Indo-Pacific, may be encouraged within the U.K.'s defense and foreign ministries, but political forces may overwhelm such established perspectives."

## **Office of Surface Mining**

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### **Sen. Maria Cantwell Says Governments Should Not Be On The Hook For Coal Mine Cleanups.**

The [Spokane \(WA\) Spokesman-Review](#) (4/20, Fleig) reports that the Government Accountability Office is "recommending that lawmakers eliminate the ability of coal mine owners to self-certify their financial wealth, known as 'self-bonding.'" Sen. Maria Cantwell "requested the GAO report along with several other Democratic senators." Cantwell said, "I welcome GAO's recommendation

to pass responsible legislation making coal companies clean up pollution. Secretary (of the Interior Ryan) Zinke should also reverse course and crack down on this irresponsible coal mining practice."

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **Geological Survey Reports Minor Underground Quake In Alabama.**

The [AP](#) (4/21) reports that "authorities detected an early morning underground earth tremor in Alabama." The U.S. Geological Survey "said the magnitude 2.3 earthquake was detected in northwest Alabama at 6:42 a.m. on Saturday."

#### **Additional Reading.**

- *Major Earthquake On Bay Area Fault Could Kill 800 People, USGS Predicts.* [NPR](#) (4/20, Raphelson).
- *California Fault Line Is 'Tectonic Time Bomb' For Disastrous Earthquake, Researchers Say.* [Fox News](#) (4/22, Fedschun).
- *The Yellowstone Supervolcano Is A Disaster Waiting To Happen.* [Washington Post](#) (4/20, Achenbach).

## **Opinion Pieces**

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### **Why The BLM Methane Rule Works For Industry And Taxpayers.**

In an op-ed for [The Hill](#) (4/20, Brown), Isaac Brown, executive director of the Center for Methane Solutions, criticizes the Trump Administration's recent decision "to roll back the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Methane Waste Prevention Rule." According to Brown, "the rescission of this common-sense regulation is wasteful, misguided and harmful to America's economy, and economies throughout the West." Brown urges Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to keep a rule "that ought to be saving taxpayers tens of millions of dollars by preventing the waste of the public's natural gas resources and supporting good-paying jobs in the methane mitigation industry."

Additional commentary in support of appeared in the [Denver Post](#) (4/20, Silverii) and the [Grand Junction \(CO\) Daily Sentinel](#) (4/22, Muhr).

### **Guest View: Zinke Should Restore Funding For Land And Water Conservation Fund.**

In an op-ed for the [Montana Standard](#) (4/20, Lieser), Ed Lieser, a military veteran, former representative of House District 5 (Whitefish), and member of Montanans for National Security, urges Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to support full and permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Lieser asserts that "the LWCF is the most successful conservation and recreation program in our nation's history." He reminds Zinke "that we owe it to our grandchildren to protect our proud legacy of public access to public lands."

Additional commentary in support of the LWCF appeared in the [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (4/22, Jimenez) and the [Asheville \(NC\) Citizen-Times](#) (4/21, Burr, Yarnold).

### **Livestock Grazing On Federal Public Lands Is A Privilege — Not A Right.**

In an op-ed for [The Hill](#) (4/22, Molvar), Erik Molvar, executive director of Western Watersheds Project, writes that "recently, the Hage family of central Nevada has become the poster boy for ranchers supposedly victimized by federal law enforcement." However, Molvar says that "far from being victims of a repressive federal bureaucracy, the Hage family demonstrates the vulnerability of our western public lands to the livestock industry." Molvar argues that "public land ranchers should not be painted as victims, given how pervasive land seizure sentiments and rebellion against the rule of law have become."

## Additional Reading.

- **Commentary: Bears Ears Could Become A Nightmare.** [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (4/22, Jones).
- **Don't Ruin Our Underwater Grand Canyon.** [New London \(CT\) Day](#) (4/22, Mathews, Alonso).
- **We Support Shift Of White Sands To National Park.** [Las Cruces \(NM\) Sun-News](#) (4/20).
- **If You Want Trust, Show Us The Receipts.** [Eureka \(CA\) Times Standard](#) (4/21).
- **Retired Superintendent's View: Our Popular National Parks Crumbling, Need Support.** [Duluth \(MN\) News Tribune](#) (4/22, Miller).
- **COMMENTARY: National Parks Need Support.** [International Falls \(MN\) Daily Journal](#) (4/22, Miller).
- **Alee Quick: The Gateway To The West, Revisited.** [Southern Illinoisan](#) (4/22, Quick).
- **Guest View: Spreading The Manure On Crazy Mountains Access.** [Montana Standard](#) (4/22, Schoonen).
- **Rob Blizzard: Bipartisan Support Needed To Protect Animals.** [Hampton Roads \(VA\) Virginian-Pilot](#) (4/22, Blizzard).
- **Caution Needed For Wind Development.** [Santa Fe New Mexican](#) (4/21, Jervis).
- **Opinion: Hope And Optimism For The Gulf.** [Houma \(LA\) Courier](#) (4/20, LeBlanc).
- **Johnson: Potential Oil, Gas Leasing Poses Threat To Land And Wildlife Resources.** [Casper \(WY\) Star-Tribune](#) (4/20, Johnson).
- **Celebrating Chaco Canyon — A Living, Breathing Museum.** [Santa Fe New Mexican](#) (4/21, Reed).
- **Guest Opinion: Lawsuit Threatens To End Lower Yellowstone Irrigation.** [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (4/21, Halvorson).
- **Editorial: Chetco Bar Salvage Plan Strikes A Balance.** [Medford \(OR\) Mail Tribune](#) (4/22).
- **Guest Opinion: Thumbs Down On Trump's Misdeeds.** [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (4/21, Otjen).
- **Column: On Earth Day Renewing Our Commitment To A Cleaner Environment.** [Valley News \(VT\)](#) (4/21, Hassan).
- **An Earth Day Reflection: America's National Park System.** [Atlanta SaportaReport](#) (4/22, Bethea).
- **Federal Government Continues To Give Native American Tribes A Bad Deal.** [Daily Signal](#) (4/20, Sutherlin, Tubb).

## Top National News

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### Trump Signals Caution On North Korea, Mocks Media Reaction To Talks.

The President yesterday urged caution about the fate of his diplomatic efforts toward North Korea, and mocked media commentators for their criticism of his approach. Trump wrote on [Twitter](#), "Funny how all of the Pundits that couldn't come close to making a deal on North Korea are now all over the place telling me how to make a deal!" Trump also [wrote](#), "We are a long way from conclusion on North Korea, maybe things will work out, and maybe they won't – only time will tell...But the work I am doing now should have been done a long time ago!" Trump's tweets follow a stream of skeptical media coverage, as well as his own comments last week, when he told reporters, "I hope to have a very successful meeting. If we don't think it's going to be successful, we won't have it. If I think it's a meeting that is not going to be fruitful, we're not going to go. If the meeting when I'm there is not fruitful, I will respectfully leave the meeting."

Last night,  [NBC Nightly News](#) (4/22, story 5, 2:15, Snow) referred to "more upbeat and cautious reaction from" Trump, while [Reuters](#) (4/22) describes him as "striking a cautious note a

day after the North's pledge to end its nuclear tests raised hopes," the [New York Post](#) (4/22, Steinbuch) says he "tempered his enthusiasm" and [Bloomberg News](#) (4/22, Krasny) that he "tempered his optimism."

[USA Today](#) (4/22, Jackson) reports "Trump said...he is still hoping for an unprecedented meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, but many details remain and it may not happen." The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Perlez) says the President "apparently wants to claim a place in history as the American leader who formally ended the Korean War – even though he tweeted on Sunday morning that he was not rushing into a deal," and the [Washington Times](#) (4/22, Miller) that he "cautioned that the talks on denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula remained in the early stages."

The [Daily Caller](#) (4/22, White) reports Trump's tweets "came less than a week after...Kim...agreed to the 'complete denuclearization' of the Korean Peninsula without preconditions." The Daily Caller adds that "the communist country has repeatedly demanded the withdrawal of US troops, yet the Kim regime could accept the US military presence in Korea if a peace treaty was signed." [Politico](#) (4/22, Griffiths) also reports "North Korea announced Friday that it is immediately halting nuclear and missile tests," but adds "experts say the toughest obstacles to a peace deal remain." [Yahoo! News](#) (4/22, Walsh) notes Kim also "announced the closure of a nuclear testing site in the northern region of the country."

The [CBS Weekend News](#) (4/22, story 3, 2:15, Brennan) reported that all of "this was what the White House already expected North Korea to do ahead of that summit," though "the addition of that nuclear site...was news." CBS added, however, that "just because you're not firing off missiles or testing doesn't mean you're not running computer models or enriching different kinds of weapons-grade material that could be used in the future. It also doesn't mean you're not selling that knowledge elsewhere." To [Stars And Stripes](#) (4/22, Gamel), "North Korea's declaration that it will freeze nuclear and intercontinental ballistic missile tests throws the ball in Washington's court as the sides prepare for a historic summit." At any rate, "experts noted the North can likely afford to take a break from testing after demonstrating alarming progress with dozens of missile launches and its sixth and most powerful nuclear test last year."

Trump also called out NBC's Chuck Todd yesterday, [tweeting](#), "Sleepy Eyes Chuck Todd of Fake News NBC just stated that we have given up so much in our negotiations with North Korea, and they have given up nothing. Wow, we haven't given up anything & they have agreed to denuclearization (so great for World), site closure, & no more testing!" [CNN](#) (4/22, Sullivan) notes Trump "was responding to comments by...Todd on NBC's 'Sunday Today' show in which he said North Korean leader Kim...seems to be giving very little but making it seem like he's giving a lot." Todd "said the tone of cooperation was a positive development but added, 'there's not many preconditions the United States is asking for.'"

The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Rogers) recounts that "on the show, Marc Short, the White House legislative affairs director, had an answer teed up" for Todd: "that the North Koreans had given the United States 'an agreement to stop testing' nuclear weapons." Short also "said the administration had 'cautious optimism' about the North Korea talks, which are expected in the next month or two," but he added Trump "would not relent on his 'maximum pressure' campaign against the North until it denuclearized."

Sen. Tom Cotton told [CBS' Face the Nation](#) (4/22, Brennan), "I think this announcement on Friday is better than continued testing but it's not much better than that. As you say it's easily reversible decision" and he "made no announcement about medium or short range ballistic missiles that threatened hundreds of thousands in Korea and Japan, but they show that the President has put Kim Jong-un on the wrong foot."

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, also on [CBS' Face the Nation](#) (4/22, Brennan), cast the weekend developments as "a beginning," and added, "I very much welcome this approach and the fact that the two presidents will have an opportunity to meet and hopefully establish the new perimeter of a relationship." The [Washington Examiner](#) (4/22, Quinn) notes the President "is expected to sit down with...Kim...for a historic summit in May or June," and that "ahead of that meeting, Kim will meet South Korean President Moon Jae-in in several days."

**US Official: "Not A Nickel" For North Korea Till They "Substantively Dismantle Their Nukes."** The [Los Angeles Times](#) (4/22, Wilkinson) reports "a senior US administration official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said North Korea would not receive any economic assistance unless it takes steps to remove or destroy the weapons." The "senior US administration official" said, "We are not to give them a nickel until they substantively dismantle their nukes." On its front page, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22, A1, Gordon, Cheng, Bender) also quotes an unnamed official who says the Administration will only offer US aid once the North Korean regime has dismantled its nuclear program.

**Media Analyses, Corker: Complete Denuclearization Not A Realistic Goal.** [NBC Nightly News](#) (4/22, story 5, 2:15, Snow) showed Short addressing the US goal in the negotiations, "I think from our perspective, it means full denuclearization, no longer nuclear weapons to be used in warfare against any of our allies."

To the [Los Angeles Times](#) (4/22, Wilkinson), however, "the more realistic goal now is to freeze, reduce or contain North Korea's bellicose capabilities, but not eliminate them." Yet "the US goal remains a 'complete, irreversible and verifiable' ending of North Korea's nuclear program, as unlikely as many experts here and in Asia believe that to be." The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Rogers) says "experts inside and outside the American government believe that Mr. Kim's ultimate goal is to have his country recognized as a nuclear power even as he offers enough concessions – some potentially largely symbolic – to press the United States into easing crippling economic sanctions." The Times also reports that "some officials worry that Mr. Trump may be so eager to reach a historic deal that he will be lured into an agreement that falls short of the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula that global powers have demanded."

Writing for [The Atlantic](#) (4/22), Andrei Lankov says "it's astonishing how quickly the story of the North Korea crisis seems to have changed from one of fear to one of optimism," less than a year after "the US. president was threatening 'fire and fury' against Kim." Asks Lankov, "Does this all really mean that the North Korean nuclear issue, the scourge of US policy makers for decades, is about to be solved? Not at all, even if recent developments provide some grounds for – very conditional – optimism," because "while all this sounds great, it doesn't alter one simple truth: North Korea will never fully surrender its nuclear weapons."

The [Washington Times](#) (4/22, Howell) reports "Sen. Bob Corker of Tennessee said Sunday it is unrealistic to think the US can 'charm' North Korean Leader Kim Jong-un into giving up his nuclear ambitions." Corker told [ABC's This Week](#), "He views having deliverable nuclear weapons as his ticket to dying as an old man in his bed. ... He saw what happened with [Libyan President Muammar] Qaddafi. Qaddafi's a dead man now because he gave up his nuclear weapons." Corker also told [CNN's State of the Union](#) (4/22, Bash), "This is a great public relations effort by" Kim and "I think people recognize that. I think everyone within the Administration and Congress approaches this with skepticism and caution" but "I'm glad the two leaders are talking and – we'll see what happens."

The [AP](#) (4/22, Tong-Hyung) also casts doubt on Trump's chances for success, "Bill Clinton offered oil and reactors. George W. Bush mixed threats and aid. Barack Obama stopped trying after a rocket launch." The AP adds, "While Seoul and Washington welcomed Pyongyang's

declaration on Saturday to suspend further intercontinental ballistic missile tests and shut down its nuclear test site, the past is littered with failure."

**Media Analyses: Trump Incorrect In Claiming North Agreed To Denuclearization.** The [AP](#) (4/22, Colvin) reports that in a [tweet](#) yesterday, the President "claimed North Korea has agreed to 'denuclearization' before his potential meeting with Kim," but "that's not the case." In fact, adds the AP, "the North has stopped short of saying it has any intention of abandoning its nuclear arsenal, with Kim making clear that nukes remain a 'treasured sword.'" The AP continues, "Being committed to the concept of denuclearization...is not the same as agreeing to it, as Trump claims."

The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Rogers) also reports "North Korea has not in fact agreed to denuclearization," though "it has told the South Koreans that it is willing to discuss the issue." To the [Daily Intelligencer \(NY\)](#) (4/22, Danner), meanwhile, Trump "seemed to indicate that he does not fully understand what has been happening during negotiations."

On [NBC Nightly News](#) (4/22, story 5, 2:15, Snow), Kelly O'Donnell accused Trump of "declaring inaccurately" that North Korea has "agreed to denuclearization" when in fact it "has not gone that far." The [CBS Weekend News](#) (4/22, story 3, 2:15, Brennan) reported that "in the past, when North Korea has said they used the term 'denuclearization' they also meant the removal of US forces and the removal of South Korea, our ally, from underneath America's nuclear umbrella, basically giving up our protection of them. It's not clear what Kim...means this time or if the White House has anything more that they know that they haven't shared publicly at this point." However, "to declare victory before these direct talks have happened is a bit too quick in the view of many analysts, and even many within the White House."

**NYTimes Analysis: China Fears Talks Could Lead To Stronger US Influence In Region.** The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Perlez) reports that as Kim "prepares for his meetings with the presidents of South Korea and the United States, China has found itself in an unaccustomed place: watching from the sidelines," and "many Chinese analysts" fear "North Korea could pursue a grand bargain designed not only to bring the isolated nation closer to its two former Korean War opponents, but also diminish its reliance on China for trade and security." The Times adds "China fears the outcome" of the talks "could be either a North Korea or a unified Korean Peninsula leaning toward the United States."

**South Korea To Halt Border Propaganda Ahead Of Inter-Korean Summit.** The [Los Angeles Times](#) (4/22, Stiles) reports "the South Korean military on Monday announced it would muffle its high-decibel propaganda loudspeakers along the highly fortified border with North Korea as a gesture of goodwill ahead of this week's summit between the two nations' leaders." The Times adds "the devices made headlines in November when they blasted out positive details about the health of a North Korean soldier shot by his comrades during a daring defection. Their presence has in the past angered North Korean officials." The South Korean defense ministry said in a statement "it ordered the speakers turned off 'to mitigate military tensions between North and South Korea and create an atmosphere of peaceful talks on the occasion of the 2018 Inter-Korean Summit.'"

## **Trump Questions Mueller Probe, Mocks DNC Over New Lawsuit, Insists Cohen Will Not Flip On Him.**

President Trump took to Twitter on Friday night and Saturday afternoon to question the legitimacy of Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election in response to the release of former FBI Director James Comey's memos, mock the Democratic National Committee over its new lawsuit against his campaign, WikiLeaks, and Russia, to dismiss reports he belittled Attorney General Sessions and Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein as "fake" news, and vow his personal lawyer, Michael Cohen will not "flip" on him. Media coverage described

the President as upset by a series of unfavorable articles in recent days and characterized his tweets as a reaction to them.

[The Hill](#) (4/21, Cohn) reports Trump on Friday "renewed doubts about the security of the special counsel's probe" when he [tweeted](#), "James Comey illegally leaked classified documents to the press in order to generate a Special Council? Therefore, the Special Council was established based on an illegal act? Really, does everybody know what that means?" The [Washington Times](#) (4/21, Boyer) reports Trump on Saturday [added](#), "James Comey's Memos are Classified, I did not Declassify them. They belong to our Government! Therefore, he broke the law! Additionally, he totally made up many of the things he said I said, and he is already a proven liar and leaker. Where are Memos on Clinton, Lynch & others?"

On the second [ABC World News Tonight](#) (4/21, story 2, 0:30, Llamas) segment, Tara Palmeri said "the President, famous for giving his political enemies nicknames, is [also] denying a Washington Post report that he privately calls Jeff Sessions 'Mr. Magoo' and Rod Rosenstein 'Mr. Peepers.'" [The Hill](#) (4/21, Thomsen) reports Trump [said](#), "The Washington Post said I refer to Jeff Sessions as 'Mr. Magoo' and Rod Rosenstein as 'Mr. Peepers.' This is 'according to people with whom the president has spoken.' There are no such people and don't know these characters...just more Fake & Disgusting News to create ill will!"

According to [Politico](#) (4/21, Restuccia), Trump for most of last week "seemed almost reserved by the standards of his Twitter feed, save for sustained attacks" on Comey, "but by Friday night, the president had had enough." Politico continues that "in the span of 15 hours, Trump alleged that...Mueller's investigation was 'established based on an illegal act,' threatened to countersue the Democratic Party, bashed a Pulitzer-prize winning New York Times reporter and called one of his former aides a 'drunk/drugged up loser.'"

In an analysis, [Washington Post](#) (4/21, Balz) chief correspondent Dan Balz asserts that in over the past 110 years, the FBI "has weathered storm and scandal," but "what is occurring today is different" and "it is more like the crumbling of the foundations of an agency that on its best days personifies the finest in government service and law enforcement." He continues that "like much about today's political environment, the problems began before President Trump was elected but have become far worse during his time in office." Balz contends "there can be no strong foundation at the FBI when the pillars of leadership are all under assault, starting at the very top – the Justice Department."

In a more than 2,000-word front-page analysis, the [New York Times](#) (4/21, A1, Benner, Lafraniere, Fandos) cautions that while Rosenstein "so far...appears to be succeeding" in his efforts "to defuse demands by Republicans in Congress that Democrats say are aimed at ousting him from his job – and from his role as protector of the special counsel, Robert S. Mueller III," in his attempts "to deflect those attacks, some say, Mr. Rosenstein has risked eroding the Justice Department's historic independence from political meddling." The Times adds "the consequences could persist long after he and the rest of the Trump administration are out of power." The Times says some Democrats are worried that "Rosenstein is being boxed into a corner where he has to choose between saving his job and setting disturbing precedents that chip away at the independence that the Justice Department has maintained since President Richard M. Nixon tried to thwart the Watergate investigation."

Meanwhile, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/21, Nicholas, Ballhaus) suggests the likelihood of Trump dismissing Rosenstein or Mueller in the short term has decreased in an article titled "Inside The White House, Fears Of Rosenstein Dismissal Ease."

**Trump: DNC Lawsuit Seeks To Punish Republicans "For Winning."** [The Hill](#) (4/21, Bowden) "Briefing Room" blog reports Trump on Saturday "slammed the Democratic National Committee (DNC) for its lawsuit accusing his campaign of conspiring with Russia, tweeting that Democrats are

only suing because they lost." Trump [said](#), "So funny, the Democrats have sued the Republicans for Winning. Now [the] R's counter and force them to turn over a treasure trove of material, including Servers and Emails!"

Meanwhile, [Reuters](#) (4/21, Kiselyova) reports the Russian Foreign Ministry on Saturday "said it had learnt about the lawsuit from the media and that it was too early to speak about the nature of the actions Russia might take in connection with the move." In a statement, the ministry said, "If this information is true, it seems to be a kind of attempt by the Democrats to justify their defeat." Reuters acknowledges "Russia has denied the allegations of meddling in the U.S. presidential election campaign and says they are a politically motivated attempt to tarnish its image and worsen its relations with the West."

**Trump: Cohen Will Not "Flip" Despite "Dishonest" Reporting To The Contrary.** On the lead [ABC World News Tonight](#) (4/21, lead story, 2:00, Llamas) segment, Tom Llamas said "the President [was] busy on Twitter" on Saturday with "strong words of praise towards his longtime attorney and fixer, Michael Cohen." The [AP](#) (4/22, Colvin) reports Trump also "said Saturday that he doesn't expect" Cohen "to 'flip' as the government investigates Cohen's business dealings." In a [series of tweets](#), Trump said, "The New York Times and a third rate reporter named Maggie Haberman, known as a Crooked H flunkie who I don't speak to and have nothing to do with, are going out of their way to destroy Michael Cohen and his relationship with me in the hope that he will 'flip.' They use non-existent 'sources' and a drunk/drugged up loser who hates Michael, a fine person with a wonderful family. Michael is a businessman for his own account/lawyer who I have always liked & respected. Most people will flip if the Government lets them out of trouble, even if it means lying or making up stories. Sorry, I don't see Michael doing that despite the horrible Witch Hunt and the dishonest media!"

[The Hill](#) (4/21, Samuels) says Trump "attacked The New York Times" for reporting his legal team "is bracing for Cohen to cooperate with prosecutors." According to The Hill, the [Times](#) (4/20, Haberman, Lafraniere, Hakim) "provided numerous examples from aides both on and off the record who described Trump's relationship with Cohen as taking him for granted." [Politico](#) (4/21, Griffiths) reports "Haberman, a former Politico reporter, highlighted the story that seemed to have 'touched a nerve'" and her [response](#) "hint[ed] at the possibility that White House social media director Dan Scavino could be behind the morning missive." The [Washington Post](#) (4/21, Nakamura) reports "the story suggested Cohen, who has said he paid off adult-film star Stormy Daniels ahead of the 2016 election to keep quiet her story of an affair with Trump years earlier, could decide to cooperate in the investigation if he faces criminal charges."

Meanwhile, the [New York Times](#) (4/21, Cochrane) emphasizes "Trump accused The Times of using 'non-existent 'sources,'" though he did not assert that the article was false." The Times adds that Trump incorrectly "said that 'I don't speak to' Ms. Haberman and 'have nothing to do' with her," but she has interviewed him "twice in the Oval Office and three times by telephone." In a statement, Dean Baquet, the executive editor of the Times, added, "The story is filled with named quotes on the record, and everything Maggie has reported from inside the White House has proven true."

In a more than 2,600-word front-page article, the [Washington Post](#) (4/21, A1, Kranish, Hamburger, Helderman) similarly warns "the bond between the president and his self-proclaimed fixer is under much more punishing pressure: a wide-ranging criminal investigation into Cohen's business dealings and actions he took to quash negative stories about Trump during the 2016 campaign." The Post contends that "the outcome – and Cohen's response to the investigation – could determine the fate of both men, who have relied heavily on each other for years."

**Daniels' Lawyer Predicts Cohen Will Be Trump's "Achilles' Heel."** [The Hill](#) (4/21, Sanchez) reports Michael Avenatti, Stormy Daniels' lawyer, told HBO's "Real Time" host Bill Maher on Friday

"that he has found President Trump's 'Achilles' heel' and predicts he can get Trump and Michael Cohen to appear for a deposition." Avenatti predicted, "I think we are going to get an opportunity to depose Michael Cohen and the president within the next 60 to 90 days and ... I truly believe this is the Achilles' heel of the president," Avenatti continued that Trump "has trusted a moron with his innermost secrets." Avenatti added, "The problem is he has surrounded himself in his adult life with people that are incompetent and the chickens are going to come home to roost."

[The Hill](#) (4/21, Sanchez) reports Avenatti also suggested "that when the documents actually come out, and there are documents – there's no question in my mind, there are documents with Sean Hannity's name on them – the extent of that relationship, I think, will be very embarrassing to Sean Hannity."

**Davidson Cooperating With Federal Probe Of Cohen.** The [New York Times](#) (4/21, Ruiz) reports that a spokesman for Keith Davidson, "the Beverly Hills lawyer who represented two women who were paid in 2016 to keep quiet about their alleged affairs with Donald J. Trump," confirmed Friday that federal prosecutors have contacted Davidson "regarding the Michael Cohen probe in the Southern District of New York" and he "was asked to provide certain limited electronic information. He has done so and will continue to cooperate to the fullest extent possible under the law." [Bloomberg News](#) (4/21, Van Voris) says "the move shows prosecutors are closely scrutinizing payments to women in the run-up to Trump's 2016 election."

The [Washington Post](#) (4/20, Reinhard, Brown) highlighted that "shortly before the 2016 election, Davidson negotiated a confidentiality agreement with Cohen under which porn star Stormy Daniels was paid \$130,000. Davidson also represented Karen McDougal, a Playboy centerfold, in the \$150,000 agreement she struck in August 2016 with the National Enquirer's parent company, American Media Inc., for the rights to her story. AMI never published the story."

**Fusion GPS Founders: Trump's Business Deals Likely To Be Biggest Conflict For President.** In a [New York Times](#) (4/21, Fritsch, Simpson) op-ed, Peter Fritsch and Glenn Simpson, the founders of Fusion GPS, which hired "former British intelligence official, Christopher Steele, to look into Mr. Trump's possible ties to Russia," contend "the most significant recent development involving the president may be that the special counsel, Robert Mueller, has subpoenaed Trump Organization business records as part of his inquiry into Russian interference in the presidential election." According to Fritsch and Simpson, those documents and those taken from Cohen "might answer a question raised by the president's critics: Have certain real estate investors used Trump-branded properties to launder the proceeds of criminal activity around the world?" They highlight that a review of Trump's public business records, "from New York to Florida, Panama to Azerbaijan, we found that Trump projects have relied heavily on foreign cash – including from wealthy individuals from Russia and elsewhere with questionable, and even criminal, backgrounds."

## **President, Trump Campaign Dismiss New DNC Lawsuit Alleging Conspiracy With Russia, WikiLeaks.**

President Trump and Brad Parscale, the manager of his 2020 reelection campaign, dismissed a new lawsuit from the Democratic National Committee on Friday alleging Trump's 2016 campaign was part of a conspiracy with the Russian government and WikiLeaks to sabotage Hillary Clinton's presidential bid and hack the DNC's emails. Media coverage, which includes over eight minutes on the network newscasts, was similarly heavy in print and online. While analyses conceded the new lawsuit may prove unsuccessful, reporting was also focused on the President's ongoing feud with former FBI Director James Comey and new details related to the ongoing Russia investigations.

The [New York Times](#) (4/20, Burns, Shear) reports that the DNC "opened a surprise legal assault on...Trump" with a new lawsuit filed in federal court in New York "alleging that the organization was the victim of a conspiracy by Russian officials, the Trump campaign and

WikiLeaks to damage Hillary Clinton's presidential run." According to the Times, the 66-page suit "uses the publicly known facts of the investigation into Russia's election meddling to accuse Mr. Trump's associates of illegally working with Russian intelligence agents to interfere with the outcome of the election." [CNN's Situation Room](#) (4/20, 5:01 p.m. EDT, Blitzer) Wolf Blitzer said that the lawsuit surrounds "the release of stolen DNC emails." [ABC World News Tonight](#) (4/20, story 6, 1:40, Muir) Mary Bruce reported the DNC pieced "together previously known reports" that ranged "from contacts between close associates of the Trump campaign and Russian officials, to WikiLeaks' hack of the DNC's emails and their leak of damaging information."

The [CBS Evening News](#) (4/20, story 4, 2:10, Glor) called the lawsuit a "one-size-fits-all" complaint "against a string of defendants accused of conspiring to fix the election" that includes "a who's-who of the Trump campaign." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/20, Hong, Bykowicz) says that while the lawsuit does not name the President as a defendant, it does target Donald Trump Jr., Jared Kushner, former campaign chairman Paul Manafort, and Roger Stone as well as the Russian Federation and Russia's military intelligence service, the GRU, as well as WikiLeaks and its founder, Julian Assange.

[CNN's Situation Room](#) (4/20, 5:07 p.m. EDT, Blitzer) justice correspondent Jessica Snyder said she spoke "to a lawyer associated with the case, and they say there is still the possibility that the President could be named as a defendant in the future." Snyder added the lawsuit also names various Russians "who Donald Trump partnered with to bring the Miss Universe pageant to Moscow in 2013." Snyder highlighted that the DNC is accusing the "Trump campaign of being a racketeering enterprise that had extensive warnings about the Russians hacking and dissemination of the DNC emails and campaign emails."

The [AP](#) (4/20, Lobianco, Neumeister) reports DNC Chairman Tom Perez in a statement alleged Trump's campaign was "a willing and active partner" for Russia's "all-out assault on our democracy" in an "act of unprecedented treachery."

[NBC Nightly News](#) (4/20, story 7, 0:25, Holt) said the "Trump campaign responded by calling the lawsuit 'frivolous'" and [Reuters](#) (4/20, Ahmann) reports Donald J. Trump for President Inc. in a statement responded, "This frivolous lawsuit is a last-ditch effort to substantiate the baseless Russian collusion allegations by a nearly-bankrupt Democratic Party still trying to counter the will of the people in the 2016 presidential election."

[Reuters](#) (4/20, Hosenball) reports "the suit prompted Trump to send a Friday evening tweet that called the Democrats 'obstructionist' and promised a counterattack based on his longstanding assertion that Clinton committed a crime with her personal email server." [The Hill](#) (4/20, Greenwood) reports the President [said](#), "Just heard the Campaign was sued by the Obstructionist Democrats. This can be good news in that we will now counter for the DNC Server that they refused to give to the FBI, the Debbie Wasserman Schultz Servers and Documents held by the Pakistani mystery man and Clinton Emails." However, [The Hill](#) (4/20, Gstaeter) highlights in its "Briefing Room" blog that "social media mocked" Trump over the tweet, as he initially mistakenly "referred to Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-Fla.) as 'Wendy,'" although he later corrected the post.

Meanwhile, in the lead [Fox News' Special Report](#) (4/20, 6:01 p.m. EDT, Baier) segment, chief White House correspondent John Roberts reported "the Trump campaign is dismissing the Democratic lawsuit as nothing more than a political fundraising ploy." [Mediaite](#) (4/20, Feldman) reports Parscale [tweeted](#), "How would you describe the DNC and their last-ditch effort to revive the witch hunt with a lawsuit? Sham, bogus, corrupt, desperate, frivolous..." Republican National Committee Chairwoman Ronna McDaniel in [two tweets](#) added, "The DNC's move is nothing more than a desperate fundraising stunt from a party unable to acknowledge they lost the election. This

kind of garbage only serves to promote disproven conspiracy theories and fuels exactly what the Russians want – people to question the legitimacy of the most powerful democracy in the world."

According to a front-page [Washington Post](#) (4/20, A1, Hamburger, Helderman, Nakashima) article, "the lawsuit echoes a similar legal tactic that the Democratic Party used during the Watergate scandal" when the DNC In 1972 "sued President Richard Nixon's reelection committee seeking \$1 million in damages for the break-in at Democratic headquarters in the Watergate building." While then-Attorney General John Mitchell called that lawsuit a case of "sheer demagoguery" by the DNC, the Post adds that "the civil action brought by the DNC's chairman, Lawrence F. O'Brien, was successful, yielding a \$750,000 settlement from the Nixon campaign that was reached on the day in 1974 that he left office." However, [Washington Post](#) (4/20, Bump) national correspondent Philip Bump acknowledges that although the current lawsuit "attempts to establish authoritatively a connection between the Trump campaign (which certainly existed) and Russian efforts to interfere with the 2016 election (which also certainly existed)," the assertions are "flimsy" and "the DNC presumably knows that it's misleading itself."

**Rep. Speier Expresses Opposition To DNC's "Ill-Conceived" Lawsuit.** Rep. Jackie Speier, a member of the House Intelligence Committee, told [CNN's Situation Room](#) (4/20, 5:10 p.m. EDT, Blitzer) that she is "not supportive" of the "ill-conceived" lawsuit, even though she believes "we have a very serious criminal activity underway in this country by the Russians and possibly by those within the Trump campaign, and to make this political is the wrong thing to be doing. I'm not interested in a political tit-for-tat; I'm interested in getting to the truth, and if there is criminal conduct that has been engaged in, holding people accountable." Speier continued, "I think the interest in coordinating a conspiracy is something that we have been delving into," and that "Robert Mueller and the special counsel office has much more information than we have." She added this "side bar lawsuit is not in the interest of the American people" as "I don't think that the DNC has been able to do anything more than speculate based on the statements and their complaint."

**Senate Investigators Recently Interviewed Russian Lawyer Who Met With Trump Jr. In 2016.** Natalia Veselnitskaya, the Russian lawyer who met with Donald Trump Jr. at Trump Tower to discuss sanctions during the 2016 campaign, "recently met U.S. Senate investigators in Berlin, a person familiar with the interview told" the [AP](#) (4/20, Butler, Jalonick), which reports the source said that "the interview lasted about three hours and was focused on information contained in a collection of memos compiled by a former British spy, whose work was funded by the Democratic National Committee and the campaign of Hillary Clinton." According to the AP, the source, who was among those involved in the interview, also "said the dossier was discussed more than her involvement in the Trump Tower meeting." However, the AP says spokeswomen for Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Richard Burr and Ranking Member Mark Warner did not comment on the interview.

**NY Lawmakers Propose Bill That Gives State Prosecutors Authority To Ignore Trump Pardons.** [Reuters](#) (4/20, Stempel) reports New York state lawmakers on Friday "introduced legislation to give the state's attorney general and other local prosecutors the power to bring criminal charges against people pardoned by U.S. President Donald Trump." Reuters says that "the bill is intended to close what New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman called a loophole in state law that could permit Trump to pardon people for state crimes, which he has no authority to do, as well as federal crimes." In addition, according to Reuters, "passage could make it harder for Trump aides who might be pardoned to escape prosecution, even if special counsel Robert Mueller's probe into Russia's role in the 2016 presidential election were shut down."

## **WPost A1: Sessions Warned White House That Firing Rosenstein Could Lead To His Resignation.**

In a front-page article, the [Washington Post](#) (4/20, A1, Horwitz, Helderman, Dawsey, Zapotosky) reports Attorney General Sessions last weekend "told the White House he might have to leave his job if President Trump fired his deputy, Rod J. Rosenstein, who oversees the investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election, according to people familiar with the exchange." The Post says "Sessions made his position known in a phone call to White House counsel Donald McGahn...as Trump's fury at Rosenstein peaked after the deputy attorney general approved the FBI's raid April 9 on the president's personal attorney Michael Cohen." The Post adds Sessions' warning "underscores the political firestorm that Trump would invite should he attempt to remove the deputy attorney general." The Post suggests that "the protest resignation of an attorney general – which would be likely to incite other departures within the administration – would create a moment of profound crisis for the White House."

However, [The Hill](#) (4/20, Zanona) acknowledges House Freedom Caucus Chairman Mark Meadows, Rep. Jim Jordan, and other "leading conservatives have been aggressively ramping up their threats to impeach or hold Rosenstein in contempt of Congress over a stalled request for documents." While The Hill says "the release of the former FBI Director James Comey's memos seems unlikely to quiet them," [Politico](#) (4/20, Cheney) concedes Rosenstein "confounded his adversaries – at least temporarily – on Thursday by providing House Republicans with [Comey's] controversial internal memos." While Meadows told Politico on Friday that "Rosenstein's effort to turn over the memos without a subpoena being issued is a step in the right direction and I acknowledge that effort," Jordan said Rosenstein gave up "something that didn't tell us a whole lot of new information." He added, "These are just four memos. We've got 40,000 some documents they say we need. ... That to me is the test."

Meanwhile, the [New York Times](#) (4/20, A1, Shear, Fandos) reports in a front-page article reports that while the "top Republicans in Congress demanded" Rosenstein release Comey's memos, "if Mr. Trump and his allies believed that Mr. Rosenstein's refusal would deliver a pretext to call for his firing, as Democrats asserted, his decision to quickly release all the memos late Thursday night foiled that plan." The Times adds that the memos also "did little to help Republicans undermine Mr. Comey's credibility or expose contradictions with his best-selling, tell-all book. Taken together, the 15 pages of detailed notes largely back up the stories that Mr. Comey told in congressional testimony, in the pages of his memoir, 'A Higher Loyalty,' and during numerous television and radio interviews."

**President Advocated For Sessions To Fire Two FBI Officials Behind Anti-Trump Text Messages.** In an exclusive, [Vox](#) (4/20, Waas) reports President Trump "sharply questioned Attorney General Jeff Sessions and FBI Director Christopher Wray during a White House meeting on January 22 about why two senior FBI officials – Peter Strzok and Lisa Page – were still in their jobs despite allegations made by allies of the president that they had been disloyal to him and had unfairly targeted him and his administration, according to two people with knowledge of the matter." Vox says Trump "also pressed his attorney general and FBI director to work more aggressively to uncover derogatory information within the FBI's files to turn over to congressional Republicans working to discredit the two FBI officials, according to the same sources." Vox adds "the very next day, Trump met Sessions again, this time without Wray present, and even more aggressively advocated that Strzok and Page be fired, the sources said."

**GOP Leadership Continues To Insist That Legislation To Protect Mueller Is Unnecessary.** "Legislation protecting special counsel Robert Mueller has sparked deep divisions among Republicans on Capitol Hill," [The Hill](#) (4/20, Carney) reports, with GOP leadership arguing that

"there is no need to bring up the bills because they don't believe Trump will ultimately fire Mueller despite reports that he's moved to in the past before ultimately backing down." The Hill highlights that House Speaker Ryan told NBC News that he does not think the legislation is needed and Senate Majority Leader McConnell recently told Fox News that it is "not necessary. There's no indication that Mueller's going to be fired. I don't think the president's going to do that, and just as a practical matter even if we passed it, why would he sign it." McConnell added, "I'm the one who decides what we take to the floor, that's my responsibility as the majority leader, and we will not be having this on the floor of the Senate."

However, the [Washington Times](#) (4/20, McLaughlin) reports Sen. Ben Cardin, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said on CNN's "New Day" on Friday that "he was disappointed that Congress has not passed legislation to protect Mr. Mueller from getting fired by Mr. Trump, but said Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, Kentucky Republican, has assured lawmakers that will not happen." Cardin stated that "McConnell told us he wants to protect Mr. Muller" and "I suspect Congress and the American people will not allow the president to take those actions without consequences."

Meanwhile, in an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/20) asserts the lack of explosive new material in Comey's memos undercut both his credibility and the foundation for Special Counsel Robert Mueller's probe.

**Trump Boasting About Addition Of Giuliani To Legal Team.** The [AP](#) (4/20, Lemire, Colvin) reports President Trump in recent weeks "has grown increasingly frustrated with the cable news chatter that he couldn't hire a big-name attorney for his legal team," but this week he "boasted to a confidant...that he had struck a deal that he believed would silence those critics: He was hiring 'America's F---ing Mayor.'" The AP states that "with the addition of former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, Trump gains a former U.S. attorney, a past presidential candidate and a TV-savvy defender at a time when the White House is looking for ways to bring the president's involvement with special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation to a close." However, the AP concedes that "Giuliani's addition to the Trump legal team puts a renewed spotlight on his past legal and consulting work," including "his overseas business ties."

### **Melania Trump, Former Presidents Attend Barbara Bush's Funeral.**

The [New York Times](#) (4/21, Fernandez) reports that "former first lady Barbara Pierce Bush was celebrated at her funeral as one of the most beloved political matriarchs in American history." The Times adds that "as her coffin lay beneath a ivory-colored pall in the center aisle of St. Martin's Episcopal Church, some of the most powerful and famous political figures in the United States – including four of the five living former presidents – gathered to honor a woman who carried her own power and fame lightly." According to the Times, "Barack Obama, George W. Bush, Bill Clinton and George Bush attended, but not the current occupant of the White House, President Trump, whom Mrs. Bush had criticized in television interviews during the 2016 presidential campaign." However, the Times acknowledges White House officials "said Mr. Trump would not attend 'to avoid disruptions due to added security, and out of respect for the Bush family and friends attending the service.'"

[The Hill](#) (4/21, Samuels) "Briefing Room" blog reports First Lady Melania Trump, former White House head maitre d' George Hainey, and current White House usher Buddy Carter on Saturday attended former first lady Barbara Bush's funeral in Houston. Spokeswoman Stephanie Grisham said the First Lady "knew they were very close to the Bush family and wanted them to be able to pay their respects." The Hill adds that in a statement following the service, Melania Trump said, "It was my honor to travel to Houston to give my respects to Barbara Bush and the remarkable life she led as a mother, wife, and fearless First Lady."

On the lead [CBS Weekend News](#) (4/21, lead story, 3:25, Morgan) segment, DeMarco Morgan said former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush "delivered the eulogy" while George H.W. Bush "wore socks that featured stacks of books in honor of his wife's commitment to literacy." More than 1,000 mourners attended the funeral, which the [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/21, Olson) reports Barbara Bush had planned prior to her death. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (4/21, story 4, 2:25, Llamas) Amy Robach reported the former first lady is "now at her final resting place at her husband's presidential library. Next to her daughter, Robin, who died of leukemia at the age of three. An amazing life marked by service to her country, her unwavering faith – but, above all, love for her family."

Meanwhile, in a front-page article titled "An Old-school Proper Goodbye For Barbara Bush, A First Lady Of Grace And Grit," the [Washington Post](#) (4/21, A1, Roberts, Sullivan) says the funeral "for the wife of one president and mother of another offered the nation a deep breath, a moment of quiet reflection, a chance to savor and celebrate a family, a generation, a way of life that feels like it is increasingly slipping away." The Post also highlights that "a river of bad blood flows between Trump and the Bushes" and negatively contrasts Trump to former President George H.W. Bush.

However, in another article, the [Washington Post](#) (4/21, Shaban) states that "minutes before the start of the service," Trump [tweeted](#), "Heading to the Southern White House to watch the Funeral Service of Barbara Bush. First Lady Melania has arrived in Houston to pay our respects. Will be a beautiful day!" [The Hill](#) (4/21, Samuels) reports he [added](#), "Today, my thoughts and prayers are with the entire Bush family. In memory of First Lady Barbara Bush, there is a remembrance display located at her portrait in the Center Hall of the @WhiteHouse."

Maureen Dowd also honors Barbara Bush in her [New York Times](#) (4/21, Dowd) column.

**Neil Bush Announces Birth Of Grandson.** [The Hill](#) (4/21, Samuels) "Briefing Room" blog reports "the Bush family welcomed another child two days after former first lady Barbara Bush died." According to The Hill, "Neil Bush, Barbara and George H.W. Bush's fourth child, announced on Friday that he and his wife welcomed a grandson."

## **North Korea's Kim Commits To Denuclearization.**

In an unexpected late Friday announcement, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un expressed a commitment to denuclearization. The move garnered heavy network and cable news coverage, with many programs reporting on the announcement in special alerts. Reporting positively attributed the announcement in large part to both President Trump and Secretary-designate Pompeo. Reporting also focused on skepticism in the US and elsewhere as to the sincerity of Kim's announcement.

In a "Fox News alert," Bret Baier of [Fox News' Special Report](#) (4/20, 6:15 p.m. EDT, Baier) reported that "North Korea leader Kim Jong-un says he will suspend nuclear and long-range missiles tests and shut down a nuclear test site." Kim also said that "his country will suspend tests from April 21."

A "North Korean official" confirmed to [CNN's Situation Room](#) (4/20, 6:17 p.m. EDT, Blitzer): "Finally Kim Jong Un has decided to open up. This is a new chapter for the DPRK. He has committed himself to the task of denuclearization and will now focus solely on economic growth and improving the national economy. Finally he has realized the best path forward is to open up the country and normalize relations. He is finally being recognized by the international community, and this is a historic, timely opportunity." Correspondent Will Ripley said he is "speechless" and called the announcement "an extraordinarily significant development." Ripley said "this all started with Donald Trump agreeing to sit down for a summit with Kim," and so it is, "frankly, a huge win for President Trump going into these potential summits."

In the lead  [ABC World News Tonight](#) (4/20, lead story, 1:30, Muir) story, chief global affairs correspondent Martha Raddatz said the suspension of North Korea's "nuclear and intercontinental ballistic missile tests" was "one of the conditions the US insisted on, and the North, according to those reports, says it will comply." In fact, Raddatz added, "the North has gone even further, saying they will shut down a nuclear test site to prove they vow to suspend nuclear tests."

[Reuters](#) (4/21, Kim) says the announcement marks "the first time Kim directly addressed his position" on North Korea's nuclear and ballistic weapons programs "ahead of planned summits with South Korean President Moon Jae-in next week and with U.S. President Donald Trump in late May or early June." If Kim follows through on his commitment, it "would mean a significant reversal for the young, third-generation leader, now 34, who has staked his security on his nuclear arsenal and spent years celebrating such weapons as an integral part of his regime's legitimacy and power."

 [CNN's Situation Room](#)'s (4/20, 6:52 p.m. EDT, Blitzer) Kaitlan Collins reported that Trump "said North Korea has agreed to suspend all nuclear tests and close up a major test site." On Twitter, Trump [wrote](#): "North Korea has agreed to suspend all Nuclear Tests and close up a major test site. This is very good news for North Korea and the World – big progress! Look forward to the summit." Collins said according to that statement, "it sounds like he still says the meeting with Kim Jong-un, the meeting he surprised the world when he said he accepted his invitation to meet, is still on." Correspondent Gloria Borger said that "Trump does have something here to brag about, quite honestly." She added that she believes the development "may be a direct result of Mike Pompeo's visit, and I'm sure he laid out preconditions for any kind of summit that needed to take place. And we know that the Administration has been talking about denuclearization – and this is effectively what they're saying."

 [CNN's Situation Room](#)'s (4/20, 6:36 p.m. EDT, Blitzer) Collins reported that the announcement "seemed to catch" Trump's "officials off guard. I have been making calls since this news broke a few minutes ago, and officials seem surprised by the news. And I was telling them, essentially, what had happened with North Korea and the latest developments. But we do know this is a welcomed thing for this White House." Collins added that Trump "has been long optimistic about sitting down with" Kim, and "just to give you a sense of how optimistic the President is about this, the news broke recently that he sent his CIA Director and Secretary of State nominee Mike Pompeo to North Korea over Easter weekend to meet with Kim Jong-un and really lay out the ground rules for the potential meeting."

Calling the announcement "potentially momentous,"  [NBC Nightly News](#) (4/20, story 2, 0:30, Holt) similarly said it came "after CIA Director Mike Pompeo secretly met with Kim Jong Un in North Korea over Easter weekend, laying the groundwork for a potential summit between Kim and President Trump later this year."

Likewise,  [CNN's Situation Room](#)'s (4/20, 6:25 p.m. EDT, Blitzer) Wolf Blitzer said Friday's "extremely, extremely significant" announcement "follows that meeting a couple weeks ago that the outgoing CIA Director Mike Pompeo had with Kim Jong-un in Pyongyang," which potentially "set the stage for these historic statements made on the part of the North Korean regime." Correspondent Will Ripley said "sources familiar with those discussions in Pyongyang said that it was a very cordial meeting. That Mike Pompeo got along well with Kim Jong-un, who came in to the room and was very well-prepared." The two discussed "the main sticking point, being the location for the meeting," but "we don't know what other details they discussed. We know there are still three Americans being detained," and "we don't know if perhaps a deal is being worked out for their release to coincide with this summit."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/20, Cheng, Bender) notes that Pompeo was not accompanied by any State Department or National Security Council officials, according to people familiar with his visit. During his meeting with Kim, however, Pompeo was accompanied by members of the Korea Mission Center of the CIA, according to one US official.

**Kim's Announcement Draws Skepticism From Asian Officials, Experts.** On its front page, the [New York Times](#) (4/20, A1, Sang-Hun) says while US officials observed "Kim with a mix of satisfaction and wariness," analysts and leaders in the region remain "deeply divided over Mr. Kim's motives," arguing that Kim may "be trying to drive a wedge between the United States and South Korea." Nonetheless, Moon "praised the announcement" and on Thursday said he had made a similar gesture by "saying the North no longer insisted on the withdrawal of American troops from the Korean Peninsula." South Korean officials and analysis also said Kim's announcement constituted "some of the 'trust-building steps' that they have hoped Mr. Kim would take to help improve the mood for dialogue in Washington." The Times says the regional skepticism "also punctuated the reaction of officials from Japan, which North Korea has long threatened with missile strikes." Japanese Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera "said the move was 'not sufficient,'" and he "also emphasized that a suspension was far short of denuclearization."

**North Koreans' Reaction To Kim's Statement Uncertain.** Will Ripley of [CNN's Situation Room](#) (4/20, 6:46 p.m. EDT, Blitzer) said the move will, if carried out, yield "a huge cultural shift, and one of the things I've been thinking a lot about" is how Pyongyang will "sell this to their own people?" Ripley said Kim's remarks are "clearly" aimed at President Trump, as well as "the North Korean people who walk around in their cities surrounded by propaganda celebrating the nuclear program that Kim Jong-un spent most of his six years in power building. And now he's going to have to tell them that the nuclear program is finished. Now he's taking the country on a different path."

**WPost Analysis: Trump Faces Increasing Pressure Over Embrace Of North Korea Talks.** In an analysis, the [Washington Post](#) (4/20, Fifield) says as Trump prepares for his summit with Kim, "there has been lots of conjecture about what, exactly, the North Korean leader is prepared to discuss." Administration officials said Pyongyang "is willing to negotiate with the United States about potential denuclearization," and Moon revealed Thursday that North Korea will not demand a US withdrawal from the peninsula as a prerequisite for any deal. Pyongyang, however, "has said very little about all this – and that has plenty of people worried that expectations for this summit are too high." There has also been "a very notable drop – to almost nothing – in anti-American rhetoric." The Post also points to a "change of tone" on how North Korea has responded to US actions it once condemned, such as strikes in Syria or joint military exercises with South Korea.

In an analysis, the [Washington Post](#) (4/20, Nakamura) says "President Trump has been upping the ante for his planned meeting with North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un, increasing the pressure on his administration to deliver results on an issue that has vexed his predecessors but that Trump has now embraced as his signature foreign policy initiative." In recent days, the Post says, "Trump the president" has been "facing increasing pressure to deliver tangible results from his high-risk gambit, while Trump the showman, who is obsessed with ratings and scorecards, continues to elevate the bar of what is possible." Subsequently, some analysts "cautioned that Trump has offered no clear strategy," while others have warned "that by ramping up expectations, Trump is setting himself up not just to fall short but also to give away too much to Kim in a frantic grasp for a deal that he can sell as a win to the American public."

Margaret Brennan of the [CBS Evening News](#) (4/20, story 3, 1:30, Glor) said Friday's announcement "may not all be good news, because what I'm looking at here is a headline that says North Korea is doing this because they've already completed weaponizing their nuclear arms. They say it's possible to stop, for a while least, because they're changing policy to refocus on their

own economy. It could be a diplomatic gesture ahead of these talks next week between Kim Jong Un and South Korean President Moon, but the big question is whether they take that more significant step of actually freezing their production of weapons-grade materials, and how the US and other powers could verify it."

 [CNN's Situation Room](#)'s (4/20, 6:43 p.m. EDT, Blitzer) Jim Sciutto similarly said that previous Administrations have tried to achieve the denuclearization of North Korea and Pyongyang has agreed, but "each time, North Korea has cheated on that agreement. You have to remember that history." Additionally, Sciutto said, "it's not clear" what concessions the US will have to make to solidify a deal. That question will be a "major" one "heading into the talks."

 [CNN's Situation Room](#)'s (4/20, 6:25 p.m. EDT, Blitzer) Brian Todd called the announcement "significant" and "extraordinary," but he, too, cautioned that the development must be put "in perspective." Todd stressed that "one important caveat" is that "when Kim Jong-un says denuclearization, every analyst says it means something different to him than to the United States." Likewise, a front-page [Washington Post](#) (4/20, A1, Fifield) analysis says while both Trump and Moon maintain "that North Korea is now willing to 'denuclearize,'" the term "means different things to the two sides." Additionally, the Post notes, Kim "made no mention of North Korea giving up its program" – he instead "signaled a freeze." The announcement elicited "considerable skepticism among North Korea experts that Kim, having poured so much money and effort into the program, not to mention his personal prestige, would give it up so readily." Some also "pointed out that Kim's statement does not in any way suggest that he's about to do so." Still, the Post says, "the step is part of a broader and rapidly developing effort to use diplomacy to resolve the standoff on the Korean Peninsula, following months of threats at the end of last year that stoked fears of a military conflict."

Meanwhile, Barbara Starr of  [CNN's Situation Room](#) (4/20, 6:31 p.m. EDT, Blitzer) reported, the US military is monitoring the developments "minute-by-minute." She continued, "From the US military intelligence point of view, what we know tonight is that the US military posture remains the same on the peninsula." Starr said the US military and intelligence communities "believe very strongly" that the economic sanctions are hurting Kim's regime, "but the question on the table is, how far will Kim go, they say, to make these accommodations, perhaps make accommodations on reducing nuclear weapons, getting rid of the nuclear weapons, but still preserve his own position to be in power."

Former State Department senior adviser Christian Whiton told  [CNN's Situation Room](#) (4/20, 6:54 p.m. EDT, Blitzer), "I think it's interesting because he could have waited until he got into negotiations, then offered this up as a concession." As such, Whiton said, "this could be a confidence building measure." Still, Whiton said, it is "unusual" for such a concession to be announced "this early. I think it also raises the question of whether, when Mike Pompeo visited Pyongyang, if he requested this before talks begin as a signal of seriousness. But the timing is interesting and also, I think it's a sign of confidence on the part of Kim Jong-un that he's willing to do this as a signal that their nuclear arsenal is significant and capable."

Rep. John Garamendi told  [CNN's Situation Room](#) (4/20, 6:38 p.m. EDT, Blitzer) that the announcement is "certainly" a breakthrough, "and it falls on several things that have happened." For example, Garamendi said, "we now seem to be moving away" from the prospect of reunification, which both North and South Korea "previously held as a primary unchangeable fact." South Korean President Moon Jae-in "very courageously" took that step in a "very difficult political environment." Additionally, Garamendi said, the US "has consistently said that they wanted a freeze on the nuclear weapons development as well as on the missile development," and that is now "in place," raising hopes that "over the months and years, a reduction of the tension and a reduction

of the military standoff that has existed since 1953" can be achieved. Garamendi said he also "suspect[s] some very good things" came from Pompeo's meeting.

However, Tom Rogan of the Washington Examiner told [Fox News' Special Report](#) (4/20, 6:50 p.m. EDT, Baier) that Friday's announcement is significant, and that "the President is absolutely right. With Kim Jong-un, he should do" a summit sooner rather than later. He said such urgency is needed "so the President can say let's make that deal. I think Trump's comment suggests he gets that."

**WSJournal A1: Kim's Announcement Signals Possible Release Of US Detainees.** On its front page, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/20, A1, Cheng, Bender) reports that Kim's announcement came amid negotiations on the release of three American detainees, raising hopes that such an outcome may be realized. According to a person familiar with the discussions, the Administration has conditioned talks with North Korea on the US citizens' release, and that request has been met with reassurances from Pyongyang.

**NYTimes A1: North Korean Economy Buckling Under Sanctions.** In a front-page analysis, the [New York Times](#) (4/20, Sang-Hun) says there is "growing evidence that tough new sanctions imposed on North Korea to stop its nuclear weapons and missile programs have begun to bite, and bite hard." Among "the signs that the closed, secretive country is finding ways to cope," the Times says, are the "elaborate efforts to smuggle goods in and out of North Korea." It is "far from clear, however, whether the pain from sanctions is forcing Mr. Kim to make concessions, and whether it could be enough to drive him to trade away his nuclear arsenal." Defectors and many analysts "have doubts about whether economic pressure alone, no matter how painful, can change the behavior of an impoverished, tightly controlled nation that has endured extreme hardship before." In fact, many "analysts say there are few signs that North Korea's economy has reached a breaking point" – and may even be "more robust than many outsiders realize."

**South Korea: Direct Phone Line Established Between Seoul, Pyongyang.** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/20, Cheng) reports South Korean President Moon Jae-in's office said Friday that for the first time, North and South Korea successfully established a direct telephone line between Moon and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un in a bid to build trust and momentum ahead of a scheduled meeting in the demilitarized zone next week. The director for the situation room in Seoul, Youn Kun-young, said the test phone call "went smoothly" and lasted just over four minutes.

**North Korean Official To Discuss Labor Migrants In Russia Visit.** [Reuters](#) (4/20, Kiselyova) briefly reports that "North Korean Deputy Economy Minister Hwang Kun-il traveled to Russia on Friday with a delegation to hold talks on labor migrants, the Russian embassy in Pyongyang said."

**Poll: Americans Fear Worsening US Relations With Russia, North Korea, China.** The [AP](#) (4/20, Pennington, Swanson) reports that "Americans largely fear the country's relationship with Russia and China will get worse in the coming year, and despite signs of diplomatic progress with Kim Jong Un on nuclear weapons, nearly half say the same about North Korea," according to poll conducted by the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research of 1,140 adults from April 11 to 16. The poll "found that Americans are most downbeat about the relationship with Russia: 56 percent think it will get worse over the next year, while just 13 percent think it will improve." On China, the poll found that "some 48 percent expect relations to get worse in the next year, while just 17 percent expect things to get better." Forty percent of Americans polled did, however, say that they "approve of the overall job Trump is doing as president."

## **On Earth Day, Trump Notes Need For "Market-Driven Economy" To Protect Environment.**

[The Hill](#) (4/22, Greenwood) reports President Trump marked Earth Day on Sunday by renewing his vow to undo "unnecessary and harmful regulations," and insisting that a "market-driven economy is essential to protecting" the environment. In a statement, the President said, "We know that it is

impossible for humans to flourish without clean air, land, and water. We also know that a strong, market-driven economy is essential to protecting these resources."

**Whitehouse's Efforts To Push Renewable Energy Profiled.** To mark Earth Day, [NBC Nightly News](#) (4/22, story 14, 2:15, Snow) profiled Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, who each week for the last six years on the Senate floor, has "talked about windmills." Whitehouse: "I am quite determined to do everything that I can to make sure that the very map of my state is not changed by carbon pollution on my watch."

## Editorial Wrap-Up

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### New York Times.

**"Mueller Guides Us Through The Swamp."** The [New York Times](#) (4/22) editorializes that Mueller "has not yet presented evidence that the Trump campaign conspired with Russian agents to subvert the 2016 election. But he has already provided an instructive guide to the swampy world of corporations, law firms and Washington lobbying shops, and to how a tough prosecutor can bring some measure of justice to bear. ... Amid all the tawdry allegations" surrounding Michael Cohen, Trump "would have us believe he is holding high the banner of a sacred principle – attorney-client privilege. ... In the world of white-collar crime, though, business as usual has meant that the attorney-client privilege has often been a means to keep the law at bay."

**"Graft In South Africa: The People Deserve Better."** In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (4/22) writes that while many countries have worse corruption than South Africa, by the measure of failing to live up to its "own potential and promise," it "has become gorged on corruption." The Times references a recent article in the paper by Norimitsu Onishi and Selam Gebrekidan that found "elaborate schemes to siphon off tens of billions of public dollars intended to improve the lives of the very people the A.N.C. [African National Congress] promised to lead to a new, equal and just nation." The Times concludes South Africa "has the democratic tools to combat the blight of corruption," but it isn't clear whether President Cyril Ramaphosa, or the ANC is "any longer capable of wielding them."

### Washington Post.

**"Our Elections Remain Open To Attack."** In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (4/22) warns that "as this year's midterm elections approach, the country is still unprepared for another Russian attack on the vote," and Trump "continues to send mixed signals – at best – about what he would do if the Kremlin launched an even more aggressive interference campaign than the one that roiled the 2016 presidential race."

**"Keeping Detain Immigrants In The Dark."** In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (4/22) criticizes the Administration for "its relentless anti-immigrant crusade" and efforts "to impede what limited access potential deportees are granted to legal information." The Justice Department announced it would suspend a program Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials lauded just months before "that provides detained immigrants with legal advice but not representation." The Post concludes, "the administration's deportation campaign has swept up huge numbers of immigrants who have no serious criminal record. Providing them with due process and basic legal information isn't just fair; it's smart, too."

**"The Beep-Beep That Scared Beijing."** The [Washington Post](#) (4/22) editorializes, "Both Russia and China have provided vivid illustrations in recent days of their intent to choke off online speech and expression, offering fresh evidence of what it is like to live in a world where jokes, instant messages and funny videos can easily be censored, and where apps vanish overnight." Moscow and Beijing, it adds, are "taking their assault on freedom of expression to absurd new levels."

## **Wall Street Journal.**

**"The Job Corps Failure."** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22) editorializes that a new report from the Labor Department's inspector general shows that the \$1.7 billion federal Job Corps training program is not meeting the demands of the nation's workforce. The Journal argues that Congress and the Administration should examine the Job Corps and determine if it's worth funding.

**"Killing An ObamaCare Alternative."** In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22) says that while the Administration has the right idea in seeking to expand association health plans that let employers partner to offer coverage, proposed Labor Department rules are unclear and could lead to markedly different pricing in different regions, as well as undermining successful existing group plans.

**"Cuba Gets A Castro Convertible."** In a highly critical editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22) writes that under new Cuban President Miguel Diáz-Canel there will be few changes to the unjust regime ruling the island. The Journal adds that Cuba is in economic trouble but would not be good for either the Castro family or the military, who remain in charge.

## **Big Picture**

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### **Headlines From Today's Front Pages.**

#### ***Wall Street Journal:***

[Trump Will Tell Kim That Dismantling Arsenal Must Precede Economic Benefits](#)  
[Tencent Music Plans IPO: Valuation Could Exceed \\$25 Billion](#)  
[Investors' New Headache: It's Getting Harder To Buy Or Sell When They Want](#)  
[Retirement Shock: Need To Find A Job After 40 Years At General Electric](#)

#### ***New York Times:***

[Public Servants Are Losing Their Foothold In The Middle Class](#)  
[By Stifling Migration, Sudan's Feared Secret Police Aid Europe](#)  
[Inside One Of America's Ugliest Political Feuds: Cuomo Vs. De Blasio](#)  
[Macron Takes A Risk In Courting Trump, But Has Little To Show For It](#)  
[China, Feeling Left Out, Has Plenty To Worry About In North Korea-U.S. Talks](#)  
[As Another Pence Runs for Congress, His Business Record Raises Questions](#)

#### ***Washington Post:***

[A Supreme Quandary: Look At Law, Not Trump](#)  
[Suspect In Killing Of 4 Had Guns Taken Away](#)  
[The Danger Lurking In Raqqa's Rubble](#)  
[The Hard Reality Of "Welfare Reform"](#)  
[Macron Visit To Focus On Iran](#)  
[10 Years Later, Thousands Of Risky Air Bags Still On Road](#)

#### ***Financial Times:***

[EU Budget Revamp Set To Shift Funds To Southern States](#)  
[Buddhist Activists Halt Chinese Holy Mountain IPO](#)  
[Hiring Tumbles At UK Fund Houses As Brexit Plans Kick In](#)

#### ***Washington Times:***

[Thumbs Down: Facebook's Hate Speech And Censorship Policies No Easy Fix](#)  
[Trump Tempers Expectations For North Korea Talks, Takes Swipe At Predecessors](#)  
[Macron Arrives As Friend, Lobbyist](#)  
[States Battle In Courts While Tightening Noose On Abortion Clinics](#)  
[Child Care Provider Sues After Illinois Tells Her To Choose Between Gun Rights And Business](#)  
[Egyptian President Tempted To Expand Term After Crushing Electoral Victory](#)

***Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:***

**ABC:** Tennessee Waffle House Shooting; Southwest Accident Aftermath; Trump-Staff Members; Afghanistan Suicide Attack; School Shooting Attempt; School Bus Dragging; Severe Weather; Gas Price Tips; Starbucks Hidden Camera; Shark Attack Survivor; Hockey Fan; School Returnee.

**CBS:** Tennessee Waffle House Shooting; Trump-Staff Members; Trump-North Korea; Mitt Romney Senate Primary; Afghanistan Suicide Attack; Nicaragua Anti-Government Protest; College Frat Racism; Baseball News; Alzheimer's Patient; House Builders; Fashion Entrepreneur.

**NBC:** Tennessee Waffle House Shooting; Syria Chemical Attack; Afghanistan Suicide Attack; Mitt Romney Senate Primary; Trump-North Korea; WH-State Dinner; Expat Tax Complication; Teenager Prank Accident; Prison-Cell Phone Controversy; Bunion-New Procedure; Moose Sighting; Orca Sighting; Sen. Whitehouse-Environmentalism.

***Network TV At A Glance:***

Tennessee Waffle House Shooting – 8 minutes, 40 seconds  
Trump-North Korea – 4 minutes, 30 seconds  
Trump-Staff Members – 4 minutes, 25 seconds  
Afghanistan Suicide Attack – 2 minutes

***Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:***

**ABC:** Tennessee Waffle House Shooting; Afghanistan Suicide Attack; Trump Team-Russia Meddling.

**CBS:** Tennessee Waffle House Shooting; Severe Weather; Iran-US Nuclear Deal; Trump-North Korea; Wall Street News.

**FOX:** Tennessee Waffle House Shooting; Trump-North Korea; State Secretary Confirmation.

**NPR:** Tennessee Waffle House Shooting; Arizona Teachers Protest; Trump-North Korea.

## Washington Schedule

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### Today's Events In Washington.

**White House:**

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Has lunch with Vice President Mike Pence; meets with the President of France; plants a tree on the South Lawn with the President of France; tours the Mount Vernon Mansion with the President of France; has dinner with the President of France; views Washington's Tomb with the President of France.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Has lunch with the President.

**US Senate:** 3:00 PM Senate aims to end debate on judicial nominee – Senate convenes and proceeds to executive session to resume consideration of the nomination of Stuart Kyle Duncan to be US Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit, with agenda including vote on a motion to invoke cloture on the nomination Location: US Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.senate.gov/>

5:00 PM Senate Foreign Relations Committee votes on Mike Pompeo to be secretary of state – Business Meeting, with agenda including nomination of Mike Pompeo to be Secretary of State;

Thomas Hushek to be US Ambassador to South Sudan; and Kirsten Dawn Madison to be Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs \* President Donald Trump announced the departure of Rex Tillerson as secretary and his nomination of CIA Director Pompeo as his replacement via a 13 Mar tweet, which came a number of hours before he informed then-Secretary Tillerson by phone Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 419, Washington, DC <http://foreign.senate.gov/>

**US House:** 3:00 PM House of Representatives meets in pro forma session Location: US Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

**Other:** 9:30 AM SEC roundtable on the market structure for thinly-traded exchange-listed securities – Securities and Exchange Commission staff host roundtable to address the market structure for thinly-traded exchange-listed securities, both equities and exchange-traded products, discussing the challenges faced by participants in the market for such securities and potential improvements that might be considered to the market structure for them Location: US Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street Northeast, Washington, DC [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov)  
[https://twitter.com/SEC\\_News](https://twitter.com/SEC_News)

3:30 PM U.S.-Poland science and technology agreement signing ceremony – Outgoing Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Thomas Shannon and Polish Deputy Prime Minister Jaroslaw Gowin sign US-Poland Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation Location: Washington, DC [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov) <https://twitter.com/StateDept>

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

*John Oliver:* "We begin tonight with what has been yet another busy week for the Trump Administration, basically the 'Sharknado' administration in that they are spinning out of control, destroying everything in their path."

*John Oliver:* "It is a busy time for diplomacy in the Trump White House, with them planning the North Korea summit, weighing what to do about Syria, and a state visit with [French President Emmanuel] Macron next week. None of which is helped by the fact that no one has seen Jared in months. Where is Jared? How can we make crucial foreign policy decisions without the White House's goofiest boy?"

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